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Ex-libris



Frederick
Lyman
Geddes



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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.
IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.
THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES
THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of dities and of sonnes glade,

The which he----made,

The londe fullfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

With of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dyfyll and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My maister CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirroure of fructuous entendement,

Univerſel ſadir in ſcience----

This londe is verray treſour and richeſſe----

The firſte ſynder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabil CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orleze and regere,

In eloquence balme, coſtyll and hail.

Myſky fountaine, clere fraid and riſall,

Of freſche endite throw, Alpinus hand braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER: roye of rethouris all,

As in oure toung flour imperial

That raiſe in Brittain evir, quia reidis right

Thou buiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The freſche enamilt termes celeſtiall:

This water couth half illuſtrent full bright,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every toung terrene hail

As far as heavis murrey dols midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. III.

EDINBURG:

AT THE *Apollo Press*, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

But me was told, not longe time ago is,
 That a fithen Crist he went never but onis
 To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
 That by that ilke ensample taught he me
 That I as shalde wedded be but ones. 5
 Lo, herke eke, which a sharp word for the none
 Betwix a welle J. fu God and man
 Spoke in reprent of the Samaritan;
 Thou hadst yhadde five husbonds, sayde he,
 And thou art now that now hath wedded thee 5
 Is not thy husbond. Thus said he certain,
 What that he ment therby I can not fain;
 But that I aske why that the fiftie man
 Was non husbond to the Samaritan?
 How many might she have in mariage? 5
 Yet herd I never tellen in min age
 Upon this noumbre diffinitoun;
 Men may devine and glosen up and down.

But wel I wot expresse withouten lie
 God had us for to wax and multiplie; 5
 That gentil text can I wel understond;
 Eke wel I wot he sayd that min husbond
 Shuld leve fader and moder and take to me;
 But of no noumbre mention made he
 Of bigamie or of o&ogamie; 5
 Why shuld men than speke of it vilanie?

Lo here the wise King, Dan Salomon,
 I trow he hadde wives mo than on,

(As wolde God it leful were to me
 To be refreshed half so oft as he) 5620
 Which a gift of God had he for alle his wives?
 No man hath swiche that in this world on live is.
 God wot this noble king, as to my witte,
 The firste night had many a mery fitte
 With ech of hem, so wel was him on live. 5625
 Blessed be God that I have wedded five;
 Welcome the sixthe whan that ever he shall;
 For sith I wol not kepe me chaste in all,
 Whan min husband is fro the world ygone
 Som Cristen man shal wedden me anon; 5630
 For than the apostle saith that I am fre
 To wedde a' Goddes half wher it liketh me;
 He saith, that to be wedded is no finne;
 Better is to be wedded than to brinne.
 What rekketh me though folk say vilanie 5635
 Of shrewed Lamech and his bigamie?

★. 5626. *I have wedded five*] After this verse the six follow-
 ing are in mss. G. 1, H. 4. C. 2; and in edit. Ca. 2;

Of whiche I have pyked out the beste
 Bothe of here nether purs and of here cheste.
 Diverse scoles maken parfyt clerkes,
 And diverse prynces in many sondry werkes
 Maken the werkman parfyt sekirly:
 Of five husbandes scolarying am I;
 Welcome the sixthe, &c.

If these lines are not Chaucer's they are certainly more in his
 manner than the generality of the imitations of him. Perhaps
 he wrote them, and afterwards blotted them out. They come
 in but awkwardly here, and he has used the principal idea in
 another place, *March. T. ver. 9301*.

I wot wel Abraham was an holy man,
 And Jacob eke, as fer as ever I can,
 And eche of hem had wives mo than two,
 And many another holy man also. 5640

Wher can ye seen in any maner age
 That highe God defended mariage
 By expresse word ? I pray you telleth me,
 Or wher commanded he virginitee ?

I wot, as wel as ye, it is no drede, 5645
 The apostle, whan he spake of maidenhede;
 He said that precept therof had he non;
 Men may conseille a woman to ben on,
 But consailing is no commandement;
 He put it in our owen jugement. 5650

For hadde God commanded maidenhede,
 Than had he dampned wedding out of drede;
 And certès if ther were no fede yfowe
 Virginitee than wherof shuld it growe ?

Poule dorste not commanden at the lest 5655
 A thing of which his maister yaf non hest,
 The dart is sette up for virginitee,
 Catch who so may, who renneth best let see.
 But this word is not take of every wight,
 But ther as God wol yeve it of his might. 5660

I wot wel that the apostle was a maid,
 But natheles, though that he wrote and said
 He wold that every wight were swiche as he,
All n'is but conseil to virginitee.

And for to be a wife he yet no hve, 5665

Of indulgenc, so as it can reprove

To wedden me, if that my make die,

Withoute exception of bigamia;

All were it good to woman for to touche,

(He ment as in his bed or in his conche) 5670

For peril is both fire and tow to assembl;

Ye know what this ensample may resemble.

This is all and som, he held virginitee

More pure than wedding in freetee;

¶ Freetee clepe I, but if that he and she 5675

Wold lede hir liues all in chastitee),

I graunt it wel, I have of non envie

Who maidenhed preferre to bigamie;

It liketh hem to be cleus in body and goot;

Of min estat I wol not maken best. 5680

For wel ye know a lord in his household

Ne hath nat every vessel all of gold;

Som ben of tree, and don hir lord service,

God clepeth folk to him in sondry wise;

¶ 5677. *I graunt it wel, I have non envie*—Though maiden-
hed preferre bigamie] So those two verses stand, without any
material difference, in all the mss. If they are right we must
understand *preferre* to signify the same as *be preferred to*.
Knowing no example of such a construction I have ventured
at an alteration of the text. It might have been as well, per-
haps, to have left the first line untouched, and to have cor-
rected the second only thus;

Though maidenhed be preferred to bigamie.

¶ 5681. *a lord in his household*. See 2 T(m. ii. 20.

TO THE WIFE OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

And everich hath of God a propre gift, 5685
 Som this, som that, as that him liketh shift.
 Virginitie is gret perfection,
 And continence eke with devotion;
 But Crist, that of perfection is welles,
 Ne bade not every wight he shuld go felle 5690
 All that he had and yeve it to the poure,
 And in swiche wise follow him and his lore:
 He spake to hem that wold live parfitly,
 And, Lordings, (by your leve) that am nat I:
 I wol bestow the flour of all myn age 5695
 In th' actes and the fruit of mariage.

Tell me also to what conclusion
 Were membres made of generation,
 And of so parfit wise a wight ywrought? 5699
 Trusteth me wel they were nat made for nought.
 Glose who so wol, and say bothe up and doun,
 That they were made for purgatioun
 Of urine, and of other thinges smale,
 And eke to know a female from a male:
 And for non other cause? say ye no? 5705
 The experience wot wel it is not so.
 So that the clerkes be not with me wroth
 I say this, that they maked ben for both,
 This is to sayn, for office and for ese
 Of engendrure, ther we not God displese. 5710
 Why shuld men elles in hir bookes sette
That man shal yelden to his wif hire dette?

6 THE WIF OF BATHES PROLOGUE.

But me was told, not longe time agon is,
 That fithen Crist ne went never but onis
 To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
 That by that ilke ensample taught he me
 That I ne shulde wedded be but ones. 5595

Lo, herke eke, which a sharp word for the nones,
 Beside a welke Jesu God and man
 Spoke in repret of the Samaritan;
 Thou hast yhadde five husbonds, sayde he,
 And thulke man that now hath wedded thee 5600
 Is not thy husbond. Thus said he certain,
 What that he ment therby I can not fain;
 But that I aske why that the fiftre man
 Was non husbond to the Samaritan?
 How many might she have in mariage? 5605
 Yet herð I never tellen in min age
 Upon this noumbre diffinitoun;
 Men may devine and glosen up and down.

But wel I wot expresse withouten lie
 God had us for to wax and multiplie; 5610
 That gentil text can I wel understand:
 Eke wel I wot he sayd that min husbond
 Shuld leve fader and moder and take to me;
 But of no noumbre mention made he
 Of bigamic or of oðlogamic; 5615
 Why shuld men than speke of it vilanie?

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 I trow he hadde wives mo than on,

(As wolde God it leful were to me
 To be refreshed half so oft as he) 5620
 Which a gift of God had he for alle his wives?
 No man hath swiche that in this world on live is.
 God wot this noble king, as to my witte,
 The firste night had many a mery fitte
 With eche of hem, so wel was him on live. 5625
 Blessed be God that I have wedded five;
 Welcome the sixthe whan that ever he shall;
 For sith I wol not kepe me chaste in all,
 Whan min husbond is fro the world ygone
 Som Cristen man shal wedden me anon; 5630
 For than the apostle saith that I am fre
 To wedde a' Goddes half wher it liketh me;
 He saith, that to be wedded is no finne;
 Better is to be wedded than to brinne.
 What rekketh me though folk say vilanie 5635
 Of shrewed Lamech and his bigamie?

* 5626. *I have wedded five*] After this verse the six following are in *ms. G. 1, H.A. C. 2;* and in edit. *Ga. 2;*

Of whiche I have pyked out the beste
 Bothe of here nether purs and of here cheste.
 Diverse scoles maken parfyt clerkes,
 And diverse practyk in many sondry werkes
 Maken the werkman parfyt sekirly:
 Of five husbondes scolekyng am I;
 Welcome the sixthe, &c.

If these lines are not Chaucer's they are certainly more in his manner than the generality of the imitations of him. Perhaps he wrote them, and afterwards blotted them out. They come in but awkwardly here, and he has used the principal idea in another place, *March. T. ver. 9301.*

Rede in his Almajeste, and take it there. 5765

Dame, I wold pray you, if your will it were,
Sayde this Pardoner, asye began
Tell forth your Tale, and spareth for no man,
And techeth us yonge men of your praclike.

Gladly, quod she, fin that it may you like. 5770
But that I pray to all this compaignie,
If that I speke after my fantasie,
As taketh not a grece of that I say,
For min entente is not but for to play.

Now, Sires, than wol I tell you forth my Tale. 5775
As ever mote I drinken win or ale
I shal say soth, the husbondes that I had
As threc of hem were good and two were bad.
The three were goode men and riche and olde;
Unnethes mighten they the statute holde 5780
In which that they were bounden unto me;
Ye wot wel what I mene of this parde.
As God me helpe I laugh whan that I thinke
How pitoufly a-night I made hem swinke,
But by my fay I tolde of it no store : 5785
They had me yeven hir bond and hir tresore;
Me neded not do longer diligence
To win hir love or don hem reverence.
They loved me so wel by God above
That I ne tolde no deintee of hir love. 5790
A wise woman wol besie hire ever in on
To geten hir love that as she hath non.

Finis III.

B

Upon his propre body and nat he;
 Right thus the apostle told it unto me,
 And bad our husbandes for to love us wel;
 All this sentence me liketh every del.

Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon;
 Now, Dame, quod he, by God and by Sain
 Ye ben a noble prechour in this cas:
 I was about to wed a wif, alas!
 What? shuld I bie it on my flesh so dere?
 Yet had I lever wed no wif to-yere.

Abide, quod she, my Tale is not begonne;
 Nay, thou shalt drinken of another tonne,
 Er that I go, shal favor worse than ale:
 And whan that I have told thee forth my Tale
 Of tribulation in mariage,
 Of which I am expert in all min age,
 (This is to sayn myself hath ben the whipp
 Than maicst thou chesen whoder thou wol
 Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche:
 Beware of it er thou to neigh approche,
 For I shal tell ensamples mo than ten.
 Who so that n'ill beware by other men
 By him shal other men corrected be:
 Thise same wordes writeth Ptholomee,

¶ 5764. *writeth Ptholomee*] In the margin of the following quotation; "Qui per alios non corrigitur per ipsum corrigentur;" but I cannot find any in 'The Almageste. I suspect that 'The Wife of Bath' Ptolemy was very different from any that I have been meet with. See another quotation from him, ver.

is a cure. 18

the it there. 1765

your will be more;

even

meth for no more,

if you please.

it may give him. 1775

impossible.

and I say

for my say.

thine each my tale. 1775

never

that I had

it and true were that.

and in the end of all;

be the end of all. 1775

and the end of all.

and the end of all.

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But sith I had hem holly in min hond,
 And that they hadde yeven me all hir lond,
 What shuld I taken kepe hem for to plesse, 579
 But it were for my profit or min ese?

I set hem so a-werke by my fay,
 That many a night they songen Wala wa!
 The bacon was not fet for hem I trow
 That som men have in Essex at Donmow. 58c

I governed hem so wel after my lawe
 That eche of hem ful blisful was and fawe
 To bringen me gay thinges fro the feyre:
 They were ful glade whan I spake hem fayre;
 For God it wot I chidde hem spitously. 58o

Now herkeneth how I bare me proprely.

Ye wife wives, that can understond,
 Thus shul ye speke, and bere hem wrong on hond,
 For half so boldely can ther no man
 Sweren and lien as a woman can. 581

(I say not this by wives that ben wise,
 But if it be whan they hem misavise.)

✧. 5799. *The bacon---at Donmow*] See Blount's *Ant. T. mures*, p. 162. 'This whimsical institution was not peculiar to Donmow; there was the same in Bretagne; "A l'Abbaie Saint Melaine, près Rennes, y a, plus de six cens ans sont, un coit de lard encore tout frais et non corrompu; et neantmoins voué et ordonné aux premiers, qui par an et jour ensemble mariez ont vescu sans debat, gromement, et sans s'en re pentir." *Contes d'Eutrap*, t. ii. p. 161.

✧. 5810. *Sweren and lien*] *Rom. de la R.* ver. 19013;
 Car plus hardiment que nulz homs
 Certainement jurent et mentent.

✧. 5811. (*I say not this*) This parenthesis seems to be rather belonging to Chaucer himself than to 'The Wife of Bathie.

A wise wif, if that she can hire good,
 Shal beren hem on hond the cow is wood,
 And taken witnesse of hire owen mayd 5815
 Of hir assent; but herkeneth how I sayth.

Sire olde Kaynard, is this thin aray?
 Why is my neigheboures wif so gay?
 She is honoured over al wher she goth,
 I sit at home, I have no thrifty cloth. 5820
 What dost thou at my neigheboures hous?
 Is she so faire? art thou so amorous?
 What, rownest thou with our maide? *benedicite!*
 Sire olde Lechour, let thy japes be.

And if I have a gossib or a frend, 5825
 (Withouten gilt) thou chidest as a fend
 If that I walke or play unto his hous.

Thou comest home as dronken as a mous,

¶ 5814. *Shal beren hem on hond*] Shall make them believe falsely the cow is wood. The latter words may either signify that the cow is mad or made of wood: which of the two is the preferable interpretation it will be safest not to determine till we can discover the old story to which this phrase seems to be a proverbial allusion.

¶ 5817. *Sire olde Kaynard*] *Cagnard* or *caignard* was a French term of reproach which seems to have been originally derived from *canis*, *Menage*, in v. In the following speech it would be endless to produce all Chaucer's imitations; the beginning is from the fragment of Theophrastus quoted by St. Jerome, c. *Yovin*. l. i, and by John of Salisbury, *Polyvrat*. l. viii, c. xi. See also *Kom. de la R.* ver. 8967. *et suiv.*

And precheſt on thy benche with euil preſo:
 Thou ſayſt to me, It is a gret meſchicke 51
 To wed a poure woman for coſtage;
 And if that ſhe be riche of high parage,
 Than ſayſt thou that it is a tourmentrie
 To ſoffre hire pride and hire melancolie:
 And if that ſhe be faire, thou verrey knave, 51
 & thou ſayſt that every helthur wol hire haue;
 She may no while in chaſtitee abide
 That is aſſailed upon every ſide.
 Thou ſayſt ſom folk deſire us for richeſſe,
 Som for our ſhape, and ſom for our fairneſſe, 51
 And ſom for ſhe can eyther ſing or dance,
 And ſom for gentilleſſe and daliance;
 Som for hire hondes and hire armes ſmale:
 'Thus goth all to the devil by thy take.
 'Thou ſayſt men may not kepe a caſtel wal, 51
 It may ſo long aſſailed be over al.
 And if that ſhe be foul, thou ſayſt that ſhe
 Coueteth every man that ſhe may ſee;
 For as a ſpaniel ſhe wol on him lepe
 'Till ſhe may finden ſom man hire to chepe. 51
 No non ſo grey goes goth ther in the lake
 (As ſayſt thou) that wol ben withoute a make:
 And ſayſt it is an hard thing for to welde
 A thing that no man wol hiſ thanks helde.
 'Thus ſayſt thou, lorel, whan thou goſt to bed, 51
 And that no wiſe man nedeth for to wed,

Ne no man that entendeth unto heven.

With wilde thonder dint and firy leven

Mote thy welked nekke be to-broke.

Thou sayst that dropping houses and eke smoke,
And chiding wives, maken men to flee 5861
Out of hir owen hous. A, *benedicite!*

What aileth swiche an old man for to chide?

Thou sayst we wives wol our vices hide
Til we be fast, and than we wol hem shewe. 5865
Wel may that be a proverbe of a shrewe.

Thou sayst that oxen, asses, hors, and houndes,
They ben assaied at diverse stoundes,
Bafines, lavoures, or that men hem bie,
Spones, stooles, and all swiche hufbondrie, 5870
And so ben pottes, clothes, and aray,
But folk of wives maken non assay
Til they ben wedded, olde dotard shrewe,
And than, sayst thou, we wol our vices shewe.

Thou sayst also that it displeth me 5875
But if that thou wolt preisen my beautee,
And but thou pore alway upon my face,
And clepe me Faire Dame in every place;
And but thou make a feste on thilke day
That I was borne, and make me fresh and gay; 5880
And but thou do to my norice honour,
And to my chamberere within my hour,

✧. 5892 *chamberere*] A chambermaid, Fr. See 8675, 8873;
Son valet et sa *chamberiere*,
Aussi sa seur et sa nourrice
Et sa mere, le moult huet nice.

Rom. de la R. 14480.

B iiij

And to my faders folk and myn allies :
Thus sayst thou, olde barel ful of lies.

And yet also of our prentis Jankin, 5885
For his crispe here, shining as gold so fin,
And for he squiereth me both up and down,
Yet hast thou caught a false suspicion :
I wol him nat though thou were ded to-morwe.

But tell me this, Wny hidest thou with sorwe 5890
The keies of thy cheft away fro me ?
It is my good as wel as thin parde.

What, wenest thou make an idiot of our Dame ?
Now by that Lord that cleped is Seint Jame
Thou shalt nat bothe, though that thou were wood,
Be maister of my body and of my good ; 5895
That on thou shalt forgo maugre thin eyen.
What helpeth it of me to enquere and spien ?
I trow thou woldest locke me in thy chesse.
Thou shuldest say, Fayr wif, go wher thee leste ; 5900
Take your disport ; I wol nat leve no tales ;
I know you for a trewe wif, Dame Ales.

We love no man that taketh kepe or charge
Wher that we gon ; we wol be at our large.
Of alle men yblest mote he be 5905
The wif astrologien Dan Ptholomee,
That sayth this proverbe in his Almageste,
Of alle men his wisdom is higheste
That rekketh not who hath the world in hond.

By this proverbe thou shalt wel understand, 5910

Have thou ynough, what thar thee rekke or care
How merily that other folkes fare ?

For certes, olde dotard, by your leve,

Ye shullen have queint right ynough at eve.

He is to gret a nigard that wol werne 5915

A man to light a candel at his lanterne ;

He shal have never the lesse light parde :

Have thou ynough thee thar not plainen thee.

Thou sayst also if that we make us gay

With clothing and with precious array 5920

That it is peril of our chastitee :

And yet with forwe thou enforcest thee,

And sayst thise wordes in the apostles name ;

In habit made with chastitee and shame

Ye women shul appareile you, (quod he) 5925

And nat in tressed here and gay perrie,

As perles, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.

After thy text ne after thy rubriche

I wol not work as mochel as a gnat.

Thou sayst also I walke out like a cat ; 5930

For who so wolde senge the cattles skin

Than wol the cat wel dwellen in hire in ;

And if the cattles skin be fleke and gay

She wol nat dwellen in hous half a day,

But forth she wol, or any day be dawed, 5935

To shew hire skin and gon a caterwawed.

*. 5923. *in the apostles name*] See 1 Tim. ii. 9.

This is to say, if I be gay, fire shrewe,
 I wol renne out my borel for to shewe.
 Sire olde fool, what helpeth thee to spien ?
 Though thou pray Argus with his hundred eyen 5940
 To be my wardecorps, as he can best,
 In faith he shal not kepe me but me lest :
 Yet coude I make his berd, so mote I the.

Thou sayest eke that ther ben thinges three,
 Which thinges gretly troublen all this erthe, 5945
 And that no wight ne may endure the ferthe :
 O Iese fire shrewe, Jesu short thy lif.

Yet prechest thou, and sayst, An hateful wif
 Yrekened is for on of thise meschances.
 Be ther non other maner resemblances 5950
 That ye may liken your parables to
 But if a sely wif be on of tho ?

Thou likenest eke womans love to helle,
 To barrein lond ther water may not dwelle.

Thou likenest it also to wilde fire; 5955
 The more it brenneth the more it hath desire
 To consume every thing that brent wol be.

Thou sayest right as wormes shende a tre
 Right so a wif destroieth hire husbond;
 This knowen they that ben to wives bond. 5960

Lordings, right thus, as ye han understond,
 Bare I flisly min old husbondes on hond,
 That thus they saiden in hir dronkenesse;
And all was false but as I toke witnesse

On Jankin, and upon my nece also. 5965
 O Lord! the peine I did hem and the wo,
 Ful gilteles, by Goddes swete pine,
 For as an hors I coude bite and whine;
 I coude plain, and I was in the gilt,
 Or elles oftentime I had ben spile. 5970
 Who so first cometh to the mill first grint;
 I plained first, so was our werre yfint.
 They were ful glad to excusen hem ful blive
 Of thing the which they never agilt hir live.
 Of wenches wold I beren hem on hond 5975
 Whan that for sike unnetthes might they stond,
 Yet tikeled I his herte for that he
 Wend that I had of him so gret chiertee:
 I swore that all my walking out by night
 Was for to espie wenches that he dight: 5980
 Under that colour had I many a mirth;
 For all swiche wit is yeven us in our birth;
 Deceite, weping, spinning, God hath yeven
 To women kindly while that they may liven.
 And thus of o thing I may avaunten me, 5985
 At th' ende I had the beter in eche degree
 By sleight or force, or by som maner thing,
 As by continual murmur or grutching,
 Namely a-bed; ther hadden they meschance;
 Ther wold I chide, and don hem no plesance: 5990
 I wold no leuger in the bed abide
 If that I felt his arme over my side,

Til he had made his raunfon unto me,
 Than wold I soffre him do his nicetee :
 And therefore every man this Tale I tell, 599f
 Winne who so may, for all is for to sell.
 With empty hond men may no haukes lure;
 For winning wold I all his lust endure,
 And maken me a feined appetit,
 And yet in bacon had I never delit, 6000
 That maked me that ever I wold hem chide;
 For though the Pope had sitten hem beside
 I wold not spare hem at hir owen bord,
 For by my trouthe I quitte hem word for word.
 As helpe me veray God omnipotent, 6005
 Tho I right now shuld make my testament,
 I ne owe hem not a word that it n'is quit;
 I brought it so abouten by my wit
 That they must yeve it up as for the best,
 Or elles had we never ben in rest; 6010
 For though he loked as a wood leon
 Yet shuld he faille of his conclusion.

'Than wold I say, Now, goode lefe, take kepe;
 How mekely loketh Wilkin oure shepe!
 Come ner my spoufe, and let me ba thy cheke; 6015
 Ye shulden be al patient and meke,
 And han a swete spiced conscience,
 Sith ye so preche of Jobes patience.
 Suffieth alway sin ye so wel can preche,
 And but ye do, certain we shal you teche 6020

That it is faire to han a wif in pees.
 On of us two moft bowen doutelees;
 And fith a man is more reſonable
 Than woman is ye moften ben ſuffrable.
 What aileth you to grutchen thus and grone? 6025
 Is it for ye wold have my queint alone?
 Why take it all; ho, have it every del:
 Peter, I ſhrew you but ye love it wel:
 For if I wolde fell my *belle choſe*
 I coude walke as freſhe as is a roſe, 6030
 But I wol kepe it for your owen toth.
 Ye be to blame, by God I ſay you ſoth.

Swiche maner wordes hadden we on hond.
 Now wol I ſpeken of my of fourthe huſbond.

My fourthe huſbonde was a revellour, 6035
 This is to ſayn, he had a paramour,
 And I was yonge and ful of ragerie,
 Stibborne and ſtrong, and joly as a pie;
 Tho coude I dancen to an harpe ſuale,
 And ſing ywis as any nightingale, 6040
 Whan I had dronke a draught of ſwete wine.
 Metellius, the foule cherle, the ſwine,
 That with a ſtaf beraſt his wif hire lif
 For ſhe drank wine, though I had ben his wif
 Ne ſhuld he not have daunted me fro drinke; 6045
 And after wine of Venus moſt I thiinke;

¶ 6042. *Metellius*] This ſtory is told by Pliny, *Nat. Hiſt.*
 l. xiv. c. 13, of one *Meceniſ*; but Chaucer probably followed
Valerius Maximus, l. vi. c. 3.

For al so fiker as cold engendreth hayl
 A likerous mouth most han a likerous tayl.
 In woman vinolent is no defence,
 This knowen lechours by experience. 6050

But, Lord Crist! whan that it remembreth me
 Upon my youth, and on my jolitee,
 It tikeleth me about myn herte rote :
 Unto this day it doth myn herte bore,
 That I have had my world as in my time. 6055
 But age, alas! that all wol envenime,
 Hath me beraft my beautee and my pith;
 Let go, farwel, the devil go therwith!
 The flour is gon, ther n'is no more to tell;
 The bren as I best may now mooste I sell. 6060
 But yet to be right mery wol I fond.
 Now forth to tellen of my fourthe husband.

I say I had in herte gret despit
 That he of any other had delit :
 But he was quit by God and by Scint Jocr : 6065
 I made him of the same wood a croce,
 Not of my body in no soule manere,
 But certainly I made folk swiche chere
 That in his owen grese I made him frie
 For anger and for veray jaloufie. 6070
 By God, in erth I was his Purgatorie,
 For which I hope his soule be in glorie :

¶ 6040. *In woman vinolent* Rem. de la R. 14222;

Car puisque femme est en vice

El n'a point en lui de defence.—

¶ 6065. *Scint Jocr* Or *Jocyn*. Sanctus Judocus was a saint of Ponticus, *Revel. 11. 12*. prefixed to Menages, *Revel. 11.*

For, God it wote, he fate ful oft and songe
 Whan that his sho ful bitterly him wrouge;
 Ther was no wight, save God and he, that wiste
 In many a wise how fore that I him twiste. 6076
 He died whan I came fro Jerusalem,
 And lith ygrave under the rode-beem;
 All is his tombe not so curious
 As was the sepulcre of him Darius, 6080
 Which that Appelles wrought so sotelly:
 It is but wast to bury hem preciouflly.
 Let him farewel, God give his soule rest,
 He is now in his grave and in his chest.

Now of my fifthe husbonde wol I telle: 6085
 God let his soule never come in helle:
 And yet was he to me the moste shrew;
 That fele I on my ribbes all by rew,
 And ever shal unto min ending day:
 But in our bed he was so fresh and gay, 6090
 And therewithall he coude so wel me glose,
 Whan that he wolde han my *bells chofe*,
 That though he had me bet on every bon
 He coude win agen my love anon.
 I trow I loved him the bet, for he 6095
 Was of his love so dangerous to me.
 We winnemen han, if that I shal not lie,
 In this matere a queinte fantasie.
 Waite, what thing we may nat lightly have
 Therafter wol we cry all day and crave. 6100

Finis III.

C

Forbede us thing and that desiren we;
 Prese on us fast and thanne wol we see.
 With danger attren we all our chaffare;
 Gret prece at market maketh dere ware,
 And to gret chepe is holden at liel prife; 6105
 This knoweth every woman that is wise.

My fifthe husbonde, God his soule bless,
 Which that I toke for love and no richesse,
 He somtime was a clerk of Oxenforde,
 And had left scole, and went at home at borde 6110
 With my goffib, dwelling in oure town,
 God have hire soule! hire name was Alifoun.
 She knew my herte and all my privtee
 Bet than our pariss prest, so mote I the:
 To hire bewried I my conseil all, 6115
 For had my husbond pised on a wall,
 Or don a thing that shuld have cost his lif,
 To hire, and to another worthy wif,
 And to my nece, which that I loved wel,
 I wold have told his conseil every del: 6120
 And so I did ful often, God it wote,
 That made his face ful often red and hote
 For veray shame, and blamed himself for he
 Had told to me so gret a privtee.

And so befell that ones in a Lent 6125
 (So often times I to my goffib went,
 For ever yet I loved to be gay,
 And for to walke in March, April, and May,

From hous to hous, to heren fondry tales)
 That Jankin clerk, and my gossib Dame Ales, 6130
 And I myself, into the felde went.
 Myn husbond was at London all that Lent :
 I had the better leiser for to pleie,
 And for to see, and eke for to be seie
 Of lusty folk. What wist I wher my grace 6135
 Was shapen for to be, or in what place ?
 Therfore made I my visitations
 To vigilies and to processions,
 To prechings eke, and to thise pilgrimages,
 To playes of miracles, and mariages, 6140
 And wered upon my gay skarlet gites.
 Thise wormes, ne thise mothes, ne thise mites,
 Upon my paraille frett hem never a del ;
 And wost thou why ? for they were used wel.
 Now wol I tellen forth what happed me. 6145
 I say that in the felde walked we
 Till trewely we had swiche daliance
 This clerk and I, that of my purveance
 I spake to him, and said him how that he,
 If I were widewe, shulde wedden me. 6150
 For certainly, I say for no bobance,
 Yet was I never without purveance

✧. 6137. *visitations*] *Rom. de la R.* 12492 ;

Souvent vaise a la mere Eglise,

Et face *visitations*

Aux nopces, aux processions,

Aux jeux, aux fettes, aux caroles.—

✧. 6151. *bobance*] *Boasting pride*, Fr. “ En orgueil et en lo-

Of mariage, ne of other thinges eke:
 I hold a mouses wit not worth a leke
 That hath but on hole for to sterten to,
 And if that faille than is all ydo.

I bare him on hond he had enchanted me,
 (My dame taughte me that subtiltee)
 And eke I sayd I mette of him all night,
 He wold han slain me as I lay upright,
 And all my bed was ful of veray blood;
 But yet I hope that ye shuln do me good,
 For blood betokeneth gold, as me was taught
 And al was false, I dremed of him right naug
 But as I folwed ay my dames lore
 As wel of that as of other thinges more.

But now, Sire, let me see, what shall I sa
 A ha! by God I have my Tale again.
 Whan that my fourthe husbonde was on be
 I wept algate and made a fory chere,
 As wives moten, for it is the usage,
 And with my coverchefe covered my vifa
 But for that I was purveyed of a make
 I wept but smal, and that I undertake.
 To chirche was myn husbond born a-me
 With neighebores that for him maden
 And Jankin oure clerk was on of tho:
 As helpe me God, whan that I saw him

*But," Froissart, v. iv. c. 70. In the edit. it
 thought in the next lines is taken from Rom.*

*Mout a fouris poure recours,
 Et met en grand peril la droie,
 Qui n'a qu'unz partuy a refuge.*

After the bere me thought he had a paire
 Of legges and of feet so clene and faire 6180
 That all my herte I yave unto his hold.
 He was, I trow, a twenty winter old,
 And I was fourty, if I shal say soth,
 But yet I had alway a coltes toth.
 Gat-tothed I was, and that became me wele; 6185
 I had the print of Seint Venus fele.
 As helpe me God I was a lusty on,
 And faire and riche, and yonge, and wel begon;
 And trewely, as min husbondes tolden me,
 I had the beste queint that mighte be, 6190
 For certes I am all Venerian.
 In seling, and my herte is Martian :
 Venus me yave my lust and likerousnesse,
 And Mars yave me my sturdy hardinesse.
 Min ascendent was Taure, and Mars therinne :
 Alas, alas! that ever love was sinne! 6196
 I solwed ay min inclination
 By vertue of my constellacion;
 That made me that I coude nat withdraw
 My chambre of Venus from a good felaw; 6200
 Yet have I Martes merke upon my face,
 And also in another privee place :

v. 6191—4.] These four lines are wanting in mss. *A. A. B.*
 1, 2, and several others; and so are the eight lines from ver.
 6201 to ver. 6208 incl.; they certainly might very well be
 spared.

For God so wisly he my saluation
 I loved never by no discretion,
 But ever folwed min appetit, 6205
 All were he shorte, longe, blacke, or white:
 I toke no kepe. so that he liked me,
 How poure he was, ne eke of what degree.
 What shulde I saye? but at the monthes ende
 This joly clerk Jankin, that was so hende, 6210
 Hath wedded me with gret solempnitee,
 And to him yave I all the lond and fee
 That ever was me yeven therbefore,
 But afterward repented me ful sore.
 He n'olde suffre nothing of my list: 6215
 Ey God he smote me ones with his fist,
 For that I rent out of his book a lefe,
 That of the stroke myn ere wex al defe.
 Stibborne I was as is a leoneffe,
 And of my tonge a veray jangleresse; 6220
 And walke I wold, as I had don beforn,
 Fro hous to hous, although he had it sworn,
 For which he oftentimes wold preche,
 And me of olde Romaine gestes teche.

♀. 6216. *with his fist*] *Ms. A. reads—on the lyffe—and so does*
ed. Ca. 2, with the addition of (what was at first a marginal
gloss) on the cheke. In support of this reading it may be obser-
 ved that Sir Thomas More, among many Chaucerian phrases,
 has this in his *Merry Jest of a Sergeant, &c.*

And with his fist
Upon the lyffe
He gave him such a blow.—

How he Sulpitius Gallus left his wif, 6225
 And hire forsoke for terme of all his lif,
 Not but for open-heded he hire say
 Loking out at his dore upon a day.

Another Romaine told he me by name,
 That for his wif was at a sommer game 6230
 Without his weting he forsoke hire eke.

And than wold he upon his Bible seke
 That ilke proverbe of Ecclesiaste,
 Wher he commandeth, and forbedeth faste,
 Man shal not suffer his wif go roule aboute. 6235

Than wold he say right thus withouten doute,
 Who so that bildeth his hous all of salwes,
 And priketh his blind hors over the salwes,
 And suffereth his wif to go seken halwes,
 Is worthy to be honged on the galwes. 6240

But all for nought; I sette not an hawc
 Of his proverbes ne of his olde sawe;

¶ 6227. *open-heded*] This is literally from *Ual. Max.* l. vi. c. 2; "Uxorcm dimisit, quod eam capite aperto foris versatam cognoverat." He gives the reason of this severity; "Lex enim tibi meos tantum præfinit oculos, quibus formam tuam approbet. His decoris instrumenta compara: his esto specula," &c.

¶ 6230. *a sommer game*] This expression, I suppose, took its rise from the summer being the usual season for games. It is used in *P. P.* fol. 27;

I have never here an harlotry or a *somers game*—
 This story is also from *Ual. Max.* l. vi. c. 3; "P. Sempronius
 "Soplus — conjugem repudii nota affectit, nihil aliud quam se
 "ignorante ludos autum spectare."

Ne I wold not of him corrected be.
 I hate hem that my vices tellen me,
 And so do mo of us (God wote) than I. 6245
 This made him wood with me all utterly;
 I n'olde not forbere him in no cas.

Now wol I say you soth, by Seint Thomas,
 Why that I rent out of his book a lefe,
 For which he smote me so that I was dese. 6250

He had a book that gladly night and day
 For his disport he wolde it rede alway;
 He cleped it Valerie and Theophrast,
 And with that book he lough alway ful fast.
 And eke ther was a clerk somtime at Rome, 6255
 A cardinal, that highte Seint Jerome,
 That made a book again Jovinian,
 Which book was ther, and eke Tertullian,
 Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis,
 That was abbess not fer fro Paris, 6260

¶ 6253. *Valerie and Theophrast*] Some account has been given of these two treatises in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 19. As to the rest of the contents of this volume, Hieronymus *contra Jovinianum*, and Tertullian *de Pallio*, are sufficiently known; and so are the Letters of Eloisa and Abelard, the Parables of Solomon, and Ovid's Art of Love. I know of no *Trotula* but one whose book "*Curandarum ægritudinum muliebrum ante, in et post partum.*" is printed *int. Medicos antiquos*, Ven. 1547. What is meant by *Crisippus* I cannot guess.

¶ 6258. *Which book was ther*] I have here departed from the mss. which all read—*In which book ther was eke.*—Perhaps, however, it might be sufficient to put a full stop after *Jovinian*,

As the Parables of Salomon,
 Jes Art, and bourdes many on;
 And alle thife were bonden in o volume.
 And every night and day was his custume
 (Whan he had leifer and vocation 6265
 From other wordly occupation)
 To reden in this book of wikked wives:
 He knew of hem mo legendes and mo lives
 Than ben of goode wives in the Bible.
 For truethelich wel it is an impossible 6270
 That any clerk wol speken good of wives,
 (But if it be of holy seintes lives)
 Ne of non other woman never the mo.
 Who peinted the leon, telleth me who?
 By God if wimmen hadden written stories, 6275
 As clerkes han, within hir oratories,
 They wold have writ of men more wikkednesse
 Than all the merke of Adam may redresse.
 The children of Mercury and of Venus
 Ben in hir werking ful contrarions. 6280
 Mercury loveth wisdom and science,
 And Venus loveth riot and dispence;
 And for hir divers disposition
 Eche falleth in others exaltation:

♀. 6284. *exaltation*] In the old astrology a planet was said to be in its *exaltation* when it was in that sign of the zodiac in which it was supposed to exert its strongest influence; the opposite sign was called its *dejection*, as in that it was supposed to be weakest. To take the instance in the text, the *exaltation of Venus was in Pices*, [see also ver. 10587.] and her de-

As thus; God wote Mercury is desolat 628
 In Pisces, wher Venus is exaltat,
 And Venus falleth wher Mercury is reifed,
 Therfore no woman of no clerk is preifed.
 The clerk whan he is old, and may nought do
 Of Venus werkes not worth his old sho, 629
 Than siteth he down and writeth in his dotage
 That wimamen cannot kepe hir mariage.
 But now to purpos why I tolde thee
 That I was beten for a book parde.

Upon a night Jankin, that was our fire, 629
 Red on his book as he sate by the fire,
 Of Eva first, that for hire wikkednesse
 Was all mankinde brought to wretchednesse,
 For which that Jesu Crist himself was slain,
 That bought us with his herte blood again. 630

Lo here expresse of wimmen may ye find
 That woman was the losse of all mankind.

Tho redde he me how Sampson lost his heres,
 Sleping his lemman kiste hem with hire sheres,
 Thurgh whiche treson lost he both his eyen. 630

Tho redde he me, if that I shal not lien,

jection of course in Virgo; but in Virgo was the *exaltation*
 Mercury;

She is the welthe and the *ryfenge*,
 The lust, the joy, and the lykynge,
 Unto Mercury.—

Gower, *Conf. Amant.* l. vii. fol. 147. So in ver. 10098, *Canc*
 is called *Joves exaltation*.

ψ. 6303. *Tho redde he*] Most of the following instances a
 mentioned in the *Epistola Valerii ad Rufinum de non ducen-*
unore. See also *Rom. de la R.* 9140, 9615, et *suiv.*

Of Hercules, and of his Deiniare,
That caused him to set himself a-fire.

Nothing forgot he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wives two; 6316
How Xantippa cast pisse upon his hed.
This sely man sat still as he were ded;
He wiped his hed; no more dorst he sain
But, Er the thonder flint ther cometh rain.

Of Pasiphae, that was the Quene of Crete, 6315
For shrewednesse him thought the tale swete.
Fie! speke no more (it is a grisely thing)
Of hire horrible lust and hire liking.

Of Clitemnestra, for hire lecherie
That falsely made hire husbond for to die, 6320
He redde it with ful good devotion.

He told me eke for what occasion
Amphiorax at Thebes lost his lif:
My husbond had a legend of his wif
Eriphile, that for an ouche of gold 6325
Hath prively unto the Grekes told
Wher that hire husbond hidde him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes sory grace.

Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie;
They bothe made hir husbondes for to die, 6330

†. 6329. Of Lima—and of Lucie] In the *Epistola Valerii*, &c.
ms. Reg. 12. D. iii, the story is told thus; "*Luna* virum suum
"interfecit quem nimis odivit: *Lucilia* suum quem nimis ama-
"vit. Illa sponte miscuit aconita: hæc decepta furem pro-
"pinavit pro amoris poculo." *Lima* and *Luna* in many mss.
are only distinguishable by a small stroke over the *i*, which may
be easily overlooked where it is, and supposed where it is not.

'That on for love, that other was for hate.
 Lima hire husbond on an even late
 Enpoysoned hath, for that she was his fo:
 Lucia likerous loved hire husbond fo,
 That for he shuld alway upon hire thinke 6335
 She yave him swiche a maner love-drinke
 That he was ded er it were by the morwe:
 And thus algates husbondes hadden sorwe.

Than toid he me how on Latumeus
 Complained to his felaw Arius 6340
 That in his gardin growed swiche a tree,
 On which he said how that his wives three
 Honged hemself for hertes despitous.
 O leve brother! quod this Arius,
 Yeve me a plant of thilke blessed tree, 6345
 And in my gardin planted shal it be.

Of later date of wives hath he redde,
 That som han slain hir husbondes in hir bedde,
 And let hir lechour dight hem all the night,
 While that the corps lay in the flore upright; 6350
 And som han driven nailes in hir brain,
 While that they slepe, and thus they han hem slain;
 Som han hem yeven poyson in hir drink:
 He spake more harm than herte may bethinke.

And therwithall he knew of mo proverbes 6355
 Than in this world ther grown gras or herbes.

[*Latumeus*.] In mss. *Latumeus*, 1, 2, it is *Latumeus*; in the edition just cited, *Latumeus* is *Latumeus*.—

[*proverbes*.] For the following aphorisms see *Prov.*

Bet is (quod he) thin habitation
 Be with a leon or a foule dragon
 Than with a woman using for to chide.

Bet is (quod he) high in the roof abide 6360
 Than with an angry woman down in the hous,
 They ben so wikked and contrarious:
 They haten that hir husbondes loven ay.

He sayd a woman cast hire shame away
 Whan she cast of hire smock; and forther mo, 6365
 A faire woman, but she be chaste also,
 Is like a gold ring in a sowes nose.

Who coude wene or who coude suppose
 The wo that in min herte was and the pine?
 And whan I saw he n'olde never fine 6370

To reden on this cursed book all night,
 Al sodenly three lewes have I plight
 Out of his book, right as he redde, and eke
 I with my fist so toke him on the cheke
 That in oure fire he fell backward adoun; 6375

And he up sterde as doth a wood leoun,
 And with his fist he smote me on the hed,
 That in the flore I lay as I were ded.

And whan he saw how stille that I lay
 He was agast, and wold have fled away, 6380
 Til at the last out of my swough I brayde.
 O! hast thou slain me, false theef? I sayde,

xxi. 9. 19, and xl. 22. The observation in ver. 6364 is in *Hrotsvithae*, b. i. p. 5, ed. *Hugding*.

And for my lond thus haist thou mordred me?
 Er I be ded yet wol I kissen thee.
 And nere he came, and kneled faire adoun, 6385
 And sayde; *Dere suster* Alisoun!
 As helpe me God I shal thee never smite:
 That I have don it is thyself to wite;
 Foryeve it me, and that I thee beseke.
 And yet eftsones I hitte him on the cheke, 6390
 And sayde, Theef, thus much am I awreke.
 Now wol I die, I may no longer speke.

But at the last, with mochel care and wo,
 We fell accorded by ourselven two.
 He gaf me all the bridel in min hond 6395
 To han the governance of hous and lond,
 And of his tonge and of his hond also,
 And made him brenne his book anon right tho.

And whan that I had gotten unto me
 By maistrie all the soverainetee, 6400
 And that he sayd, Min owen trewe wif,
 Do as thee list the terme of all thy lif;
 Kepe thin honour, and kepe eke min estat;
 After that day we never had debat.
 God helpe me so, I was to him as kinde 6405
 As any wif fro Denmark unto Inde,
 And al so trewe, and so was he to me:
 I pray to God that sit in majestee
 So blisse his soule, for his mercy dere.
 Now wol I say my Tale if ye wol here. 6410

The Frere lough whan he had herd all this :
 Now, Dame, quod he, so have I joye and blis,
 This is a long preamble of a Tale.

And whan the Sompnour herd the Frere gale,
 Lo (quod this Sompnour) Goddes armes two, 6415
 A Frere wol entermete him evermo :
 Lo, goode men, a fie and eke a Frere
 Wol fall in every dish and eke matere.
 What spekest thou of preambulation ?
 What ? amble or trot, or pees, or go fit doun : 6420
 Thou lettest our disport in this matere.

Ye, wolt thou so, Sire Sompnour ? quod the Frere ;
 Now by my faith I shal, er that I go,
 Tell of a Sompnour swiche a Tale or two,
 That all the folk shal laughen in this place. 6425

Now elles, Frere, I wol beshrewe thy face,
 (Quod this Sompnour) and I beshrewe me
 But if I telle Tales two or three
 Of Freres, or I come to Sidenborne,
 That I shal make thin herte for to morne, 6430
 For wel I wot thy patience is gone.

Our Hoste crid, Pees, and that anon ;

¶ 6414. *the Sompnour herd the Frere gale*] 'The same word occurs below, ver. 6919, "and let the Sompnour *gale*." In both places it seems to be used metaphorically. *Galan*, Sax. signifies *canere*. It is used literally in 'The Court of Love, ver. 1317, where the nightingale is said—to crie and *gale* ; hence its name *nightgale* or *nightengale*. In the Island. *at gala* is *ululare*, *ulula more exclamare* ; and *Hama gal*, *Gallicinium*. Gudm. And. Lex. Island.

And sayde, Let the woman tell hire Tale;
 Ye fare as folk that dronken ben of ale.
 Do, Dame, tell forth your Tale, and that is best. 641
 Al redy, Sire, quod she, right as you lest,
 If I have licence of this worthy Frere.
 Yes, Dame, quod he, tell forth, and I wol here.

THE WIF OF BATHES TALE.

In olde dayes of the King Artour,
 Of which that Bretons spoken gret honour, 642
 All was this lond fulfilled of Faerie;
 The Elf quene with hire joly compaignie

The Wif of Bathes Tale] A bachelor of King Arthur's court enjoin'd by the Queen, upon pain of death, to tell what thing it is that women do most desire. At length he is taught it an old woman, whom he is enforced to marry. *Urry.*

✧ 6439. *King Artour*] I hope that Chaucer, by placing Elf-quene in the dayes of King Artour, did not mean to intimate that the two monarchies were equally fabulous and visionary. Master Wace has judged more caudidly of the exploit of our British hero;

No tut menfonge, ne tut veir;
 Ne tut folie, ne tut siveir.
 Tant unt li conteor conte,
 E li fableor tant fable,
 Pur les contes enhelecer,
 Ke tut unt fait fable sembler. *Le Brut, ms. Cotton, Vitell. A*

✧ 6441. *Faerie*] *Féerie*, Fr. from *fée*, the French name those fantastical beings which in the Gothick languages are called Alfs or Elves. The corresponding names to *fée* in the other romance dialects are *fata*, Ital. and *bada*, Span.; so that it is probable that all three are derived from the Lat. *fatum*, which the barbarous ages was corrupted into *fatus* and *fata*. See *note*, in v. *Fée*. *Du Cange*, in v. *Fadus*.—Our system of *Faerie* would have been much more complete if all our ancient w

In every bush, and under every tree,
 Ther is non other Incubus but he,
 And he ne will don hem no dishonour.

And so befell it that this King Artour
 Had in his hous a lusty bacheler, 6465
 That on a day came riding fro river :
 And happed that, alone as she was borne,
 He saw a maiden walking him beforne,
 Of which maid he anon, maugre hire hed,
 By veray force beraft hire maidenhed : 6470
 For which oppreßion was swiche clamour,
 And swiche pursuite unto the King Artour,
 That damned was this knight for to be ded
 By cours of lawe, and shuld have lost his hed,
 (Paraventure swiche was the statute tho) 6475
 But that the quene and other ladies mo
 So longe praieden the king of grace,
 Til he his lif him granted in the place,

¶ 6466. *came riding fro river*] Or *fro the river*, as it is in some mss.: it means from hawking at waterfowl, *Froiss.* v. i. c. 140; "Le Comte de Flandres estoit tousjours en rivière—un jour advint qu'il alla voler en la rivière—et getta son Fauconner un faucon *apres le beron*, et le Comte aussi un."—So in c. 210, he says that Edw. III. had with him in his army—"trente fauconniers à cheval, chargez d'oiseaux, et bien foi-vante couples de forts chiens et autant de levriers: dont il alloit, *chacun jour ou en chace ou en rivière*, ainsi que il lui plaisoit." Sire Thopas is described as following this knightly sport, ver. 13665;

He coude hunte at the wilde dere,
 And ride on hauking *for the riverse*,
 With grey gofhawk on honde.

And yaf him to the quene, all at hire will
To chese whether she wold him save or spill. 6480

The quene thanketh the king with al hire might;
And after this thus spake she to the knight,
Whan that she saw hire time upon a day.

Thou standest yet (quod she) in swiche array,
That of thy lif yet hast thou not seuretee; 6485

I grant thee lif if thou canst tellen me
What thing is it that women most desiren:
Beware, and keppe thy nekke bone from yren.

And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet wol I yeve thee leve for to gon 6490

A twelvemonth and a day to seke and lere
An answer suffisant in this matere;
And seuretee wol I have, or that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place.

Wo was the knight, and sorwefully he siketh: 6495
But what? he may not don all as him liketh.

And at the last he chese him for to wende,
And come agen right at the yeres ende
With swiche answer as God wold him purvay,
And taketh his leve, and wendeth forth his way. 6500

He seketh every hous and every place,
Wher as he hopeth for to finden grace;
To lernen what thing women loven mooste;

But he ne coude ariven in no coste
Wher as he mighte find in this matere 6505

Two creatures according in fere.

Som saiden women loven best richeſſe,
 Som saiden honour, som saiden jolineſſe,
 Som riche array, som saiden luſt a-bedde,
 And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde. 6510

Some saiden that we ben in herte moſt eſed
 When that we ben yflatered and ypreiſed.
 He goth ful nigh the ſoth, I wol not lie;
 A man ſhal winne us beſt with flaterie;
 And with attendance and with beſineſſe 6515
 Ben we ylimed bothe more and leſſe.

And som men saiden that we loven beſt
 For to be free, and do right as us leſt,
 And that no man repreve us of our vice,
 But ſay that we ben wiſe and nothing nice: 6520
 For trewely ther n'is non of us all,
 If any wight wol claw us on the gall,
 That we n'ill kike for that he ſaith us ſoth;
 Alas, and he ſhal find it that ſo doth:
 For be we never ſo vicious withinne 6525
 We wol be holden wiſe and ciene of ſinne.

And som saiden that gret delit han we
 For to be holden ſtable and eke ſecre,
 And in o purpos ſtedfaſtly to dwell,
 And not bewreyen thing that men us tell; 6530
 But that tale is not worth a rake-ſtele.
 Parde we women connen nothing hele,
 Witneſſe on Mida; wol ye here the Tale?

Ovide, amonges other thinges ſmale,

Said Milke had under his longe heres
 Growing upon his hed two asses eres,
 The whiche vice he had, as he beste might,
 Fel falsly from every mannes sight,
 That save his wif ther wif of it no mo;
 He loved hire most, and trosted hire also;
 He praised hire that to no creature
 She shold telle of his disfigure.

She swore him Nay, for all the world to win
 She shold do that vilanie ne sinne,
 To make hire husbond ban so foule a name:
 She shold not tell it for hire owen shame.
 But natheles hire thoughte that she dide
 That she so longe shuld a conseil hide;
 Hire thought it swal so sere aboute hire herte,
 That nedely som word hire must averte;
 And sith she derst nat telle it to no man,
 Down to a marais faste by she ran;
 Til she came ther hire herte was a-fire:
 And as a bitore bumbleth in the mire,
 She laid hire mouth unto the water down.
 Bewrey me not, thou water, with thy soun,
 Quod she; to thee I tell it, and no mo,
 Min husbond hath long asses eres two.
 Now is min herte all hole, now is it out,
 I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
 Here may ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it mooste; we can no conseil hide.

The remenant of the Tale, if ye wol here,
Redeth Ovide, and ther ye may it lere.

This knight, of which my Tale is specially, 6:65
Whan that he saw he might not come thurhy,
(This is to sayn, what women loven most)
Within his breſt ful forweful was his goſt.
But home he goth, he mighte not ſojourne;
The day was come that homward muſt he turne.
And in his way it happed him to ride, 6:71
In all his care, under a foreſt ſide,
Wheras he ſaw upon a dance go
Of ladies foure-and-twenty, and yet mo.
Toward this ilke dance he drow ful yerne, 6:75
In hope that he ſom wiſdom ſhulde lerne;
But certainly er he came fully there
Yvanifhed was this dance he n'iſte not wher;
No creature ſaw he that bare liſ,
Save on the grene he ſaw ſitting a wif, 6:80
A fouler wight ther may no man deviſe.
Againe this knight this olde wif gan ariſe,
And ſaid, Sire Knight, here forth ne lith no way.
Tell me what that ye ſeken by your ſay,
Paraventure it may the better be: 6:85
Thiſe olde folk con mochel thing, quod ſhe.

My leve mother, quod this knight, certain
I n'am but ded but if that I can ſain
What thing it is that women moſt deſire:
Coude ye me *wiſſe* I wold quite wel your hire. 6:90

Plight me thy trouthe here in myn hond, quod she,
 The nexte thing that I requere of thee
 Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
 And I wol tell it you or it be night.

Have here my trouthe, quod the knight, I graunte:

Thanne, quod she, I dare me wel avaunte 6596
 Thy lif is lauf, for I wol stond therby,
 Upon my lif the quene wol say as I.
 Let see which is the proudest of hem alle,
 That wereth on a kerchief or a calle, 6600
 That dare sayn nay of that I shal you teche.
 Let us go forth withouten lenger speche.

Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere,
 And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.

Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight
 Said he had hold his day as he had hight, 6606
 And redy was his answer, as he saide.
 Ful many a noble wif, and many a maide,
 And many a widewe, for that they ben wife,
 (The quene hireself sitting as a justice) 6610
 Assembled ben his answer for to here,
 And afterward this knight was bode appere.

To every wight commanded was silence,
 And that the knight shuld tell in audience
 What thing that worldly women loven best. 6615
 This knight ne stood not still as doth a best,
 But to this question anon answerd
 With manly vois, that all the court it herd.

My liege Lady, generally, quod he,
 Women desiren to han soverainetee, 6620
 As well over hir husbond as hir love,
 And for to ben in maistrie him above.
 This is your most desire, though ye me kille;
 Doth as you list, I am here at your wille.

In all the court ne was ther wif ne maide, 6625
 Ne widewe, that contraried that he saide,
 But said he was worthy to han his lif.

And with that word up flet this olde wif
 Which that the knight saw sitting on the grenc.
 Mercy, quod she, my soveraine lady Queene, 6630
 Er that your court depart, as doth me right.
 I taughte this answer unto this knight,
 For which he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thing I wold of him requere
 He wold it do, if it lay in his might. 6635
 Before this court than pray I thee, Sire Knight,
 Quod she, that thou me take unto thy wif,
 For wel thou wost that I have kept thy lif:
 If I say false say nay upon thy say.

This knight answered, Alas and wala wa! 6640
 I wot right wel that swiche was my behest.
 For Goddes love as chese a new request:
 Take all my good, and let my body go.

Nay than, quod she, I shrewe us bothe two:
 For though that I be olde, foule, and pore, 6645
 I n'olde for all the metal ne the ore

'That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But if thy wif I were and eke thy love.

My love! quod he; nay, my dampnation.

Alas! that any of my nation 665c
Shuld ever so foule disparaged be.

But all for nought; the end is this, that he
Constrained was he nedes must hire wed,
And taketh this olde wif, and goth to bed.

Now wolden som men fayn paraventure, 665d
'That for my negligence I do no cure
'To tellen you the joye and all the array
'That at the feste was that ilke day.

To which thing shortly answeren I shal:
I say ther was no joye ne feste at al, 666c
'Ther n'as but hevynesse and mochel sorwe;
For prively he wedded hire on the morwe,
And all day after hid him as an oule,
So wo was him his wif loked so foule.

Gret was the wo the knight had in his thought 666d
Whan he was with his wif a-bed ybrought;
He walweth, and he turneth to and fro.

'This olde wif lay smiling evermo,
And seid, O dere husbond, *benedicite!*
For eth every knight thus with his wif as ye? 667a
Is this the lawe of King Artoures hous?
Is every knight of his thus dangerous?
I am your owen love, and eke your wif,
From the which that saved hath your lif,

And amougst yow never unrighte;
 Why fere ye thus with me this firste night?
 Yef I am like wman had lost his wit.
 What is my gilt? for Goddes love tell it,
 And it shal ben amended if I may.
 Amended I quod this knight, also I say, 668
 wol not ben amended never mo;
 I am art so tothy, and so olde also,
 and thereto comyng of so low a kind,
 at litel wonder is though I walwe and wind;
 wolde God mir herte wolde breft.
 this, quod she, the cause of your unrest?
 e certainly, quod he, no wonder is.
 ow Sire, quod she, I coude amend all this,
 t me list, er it were dayes three,
 I ye mighten here you unto me. 6690
 for ye speken of swiche gentilleste
 descended out of old richeste,
 enfore shullen ye be gentilmen;
 urrogance n'is not worth an hen.
 who that is most vertuous alway,
 apert, and most entendeth ay 6695
 gentil dedes that he can,
 im for the gretest gentelman.
 e claime of him our gentilleste,
 ilders for hir old richeste;
 they yeve us all hir heritage,
 e claime to ben of high parage,
 E ij

Yet may they not begethen for all things
 To non of his fort nor living;
 That made hem gentillite called to be;
 And bade upfetters hem in swiche degree.
 Wel can the wise part of Florence,
 This highte Dame, spoken of this sentence;
 Lo in swiche maner mine in Babylon tale.
 Ful felde up riseth by his branches stail.
 Prowesse of man, for God of his goodness;
 Wol that we claime of him our gentillite;
 For of our eldrit may we nothing claime;
 But temporel thing, that man may live and make.
 Eke every wight wet this is wel as I,
 If gentillite were planted naturally;
 Unto a certain lineage down the line,
 Fetter and apert, than wold they never fine.
 To don of gentillite the faire office;
 They mighten do no villainie or vice.
 Take fire, and here it into the darke line;
 Betwix this and the Mount of Caucasus,
 And let men shette the darke, and gethane,
 Yet wol the fire as faire lic and becomen
 As twenty thousand men might is behold;
 His office naturel ay wyl it hold,
 Up peril of my lif, til that it die.
 Here may ye see wel how that genterie

v. 6710. Ful felde up riseth] Dame, Pars. vii. 121;
 Rade volte rissorge per li suoi
 L'humana probitate: et questo vuole
 Quel che là d'as perche da se si chiam.

Is not annexed to possession,
 Sith folk ne don hir operation 6730
 Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind :
 For God it wot men moun ful often find
 A lordes sone do shame and vilanie.
 And he that wol han pris of his genterie,
 For he was boren of a gentil hous, 6735
 And had his elders noble and vertuous,
 And n'ill himselven do no gentil dedes,
 Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie that ded is,
 He n'is not gentill, be he duk or erl,
 For vilains sinful dedes make a cherl : 6740
 For gentilleffe n'is but the renomee
 Of thin auncestres for hir high bountee,
 Which is a strange thing to thy persone :
 Thy gentilleffe cometh fro God alone ;
 Than cometh our vcray gentilleffe of grace ; 6745
 It was no thing bequethed us with our place.
 Thinketh how noble, as saith Valerius,
 Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
 That out of poverte rose to high noblesse.
 Redeth Senek, and redeth eke Boece, 6750
 Ther shull ye seen expresse that it no dred is
 That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis :

♀. 6741. For gentilleffe] A great deal of this reasoning is copied from *Boetius de Consol.* l. iii. pr. 6. See also R. R. 2147.
11/21.5

For villanie maketh villeine,
 And by his dedes a chorle is scine, &c.

And therefore, leue husbond, I thus conclude,
 Al be it that min auncestres weren rude,
 Yet may the highe God, and so hope I, 6755
 Granten me grace to liven vertuoussly;
 'Than am I gentil whan that I beginne
 'To liven vertuoussly and weiven faine.

And ther as ye of poverte me repreve,
 'The highe God, on whom that we beleve, 6760
 In wilful poverte chese to lede his lif;
 And certes every man, raaiden, or wif,
 May understond that Jesus heven king
 Ne wold not chese a vicious living.

Glad poverte is an honest thing certain, 6765
 This wol Senek and other clerkes sain.
 Who so that halt him paid of his poverte
 I hold him rich, al had he not a sherte.
 He that covciteth is a poure wight,
 For he wold haw that is not in his might; 6770
 But he that nought hath, ne covciteth to have,
 Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave:
 Veray poverte is faine proprely.

Juvenal saith of poverte merily,
 'The poure man whan he goth by the way, 6775
 Beforn the theves he may sing and play.
 Poverte is hateful good; and, as I gesle,
 A ful gret bringer out of besineffe;

¶ 6777. *Poverte is hateful good.*] In this commendation of poverty our Author seems plainly to have had in view the following passage of a fabulous conference between the Emperor Adrian and Secundus the philosopher, reported by Vin-

A gret amender eke of sapience
 To him that raketh it in patience. 6780
 Poverté is this, although it seme elenge,
 Possession that no wight wol challenge.
 Poverté ful often, whan a man is low,
 Maketh his God and eke himself to know.
 Poverté a spectakel is, as thinketh me, 6785
 Thurgh which he may his veray frendes see.
 And therfore, Sire, sin that I you not greve,
 Of my poverté no more me repreve.

Now, Sire, of elde that ye repreven me :
 And certes, Sire, though non auctoritee 6790
 Were in no book, ye gentiles of honour
 Sain that men shuld an olde wight honour,
 And clepe him Fader, for your gentilleffe ;
 And auctours shal I finden, as I gesse.

Now ther ye sain that I am foule and old, 6795
 Than drede ye not to ben a cokewold ;

cent of Beauvals, *Spec. Hist.* l. x. c. 71 ; " Quid est Pauper
 " tas? Odibile bonum ; sanitatis mater ; remotio curarum ;
 " pientie reperitrix ; negotium sine danino ; *passio a* *sp* *u* *a* *t*
 " *lumniz* ; sine sollicitudine felicitas." What Vincent has there
 published appears to have been extracted from a larger collec-
 tion of *Gnomæ* under the name of *Secundus*, which are still ex-
 tant in Greek and Latin. See *Fabric. Bib. Gr.* l. vi. c. x. and
ms. Harl. 399. The author of *Pierce Ploughman* has quoted
 and paraphrased the same passage, fol. 75.

¶. 6781. *elenge*.] Strange ; probably from the old Fr. *élingne*.
 So in *The Cuckoo and Nightingale*, ver. 115 ;

Thy songes ben so *elenge* in good fay.

And in *P. P.* fol. 3, b. ;

Where the cat is a kiten the court is full *elenge*.

See fol. 46, b. See also *Gloss.* in v. *Elenge*.

For filthe, and elde also, so mote I the,
 Ben grete wardeins upon chastitee,
 But natheles, sin I know your delit,
 I shal fulfill your worldly appetit. 6800

Chefe now (quod she) on of thise thinges twey,
 To han me foule and old til that I dey,
 And be to you a trewe humble wif,
 And never you displese in all my lif;
 Or elles wol ye han me yonge and faire, 6805
 And take your aventure of the repaire
 That shal be to your hous because of me,
 Or in som other place it may wel be?
 Now chefe yourselven whether that you liketh.

This knight awiseth him, and fore siketh, 6810
 But at the last he said in this manere :

My lady and my love, and wif so dere,
 I put me in your wise governance,
 Chefeth yourself which may be most plesance
 And most honour to you and me also, 6815
 I do no force the whether of the two,
 For as you liketh it sufficeth me.

Than have I got the maisterie, quod she,
 Sin I may chefe and govern as me lest.
 Ye certes, wif, quod he, I hold it best. 6820

Kisse me, quod she, we be no lenger wrothe,
 For by my trouth I wol be to you bothe,

[*cf.* 6707. For *filthe*, and *elde* a/*þ*, *þ*.] Though none of the mss.
 that I have seen authorize the insertion of the second *þ* it seems
 absolutely necessary.

This is to fayn, ye bothe faire and good.
I pray to God that I mote steruen wood
But I to you be al so good and trewe 6825
As ever was wif sin that the world was newe,
And but I be to-morwe as faire to seen
As any lady, emperice, or quene,
That is betwix the est and eke the west,
Doth with my lif and deth right as you lest. 6830
Cast up the curtein, loke how that it is.
And whan the knight saw veraily all this,
That she so faire was, and so yonge therto,
For joye he hent hire in his armes two :
His herte bathed in a bath of blisse, 6835
A thousand time a-row he gan hire kisse :
And she obeyed him in every thing
That mighte don him plesance or liking.
And thus they live unto hir lives ende
In parfit joye ; and Jesu Crist us sende 6840
Husbondes meke and yonge, and fresch a-bed,
And grace to overlive hem that we wed.
And eke I pray Jesus to short hir lives
That wol not be governed by hir wives ;
And old and angry nigards of dispence
God send hem sone a veray pestilence. 6846

THE FRERES PROLOGUE.

THIS worthy limitour, this noble Frere,
 He made alway a maner louring chere
 Upen the Sompnour, but for honestee
 No vilains word as yet to him spake he; 6850
 But at the last he said unto the Wif,
 Dame, (quod he) God yeve you right good lif,
 Ye have here touched, all so mote I the,
 In scole matere a ful gret difficultie;
 Ye han said mochel thing right wel I say: 6855
 But, Dame, here as we riden by the way
 Us nedeth net to speken but of game,
 And let auctoritees, in Goddes name,
 To preching and to scole eke of clergie.
 But if it like unto this compaignie 6860
 I wol you of a Sompnour tell a game;
 Parde ye may wel knowen by the name
 That of a Sompnour may no good be said;
 I pray that non of you be evil apaid:
 A Sompnour is a renner up and down 6865
 With mandemens for fornicatioun,
 And is ybete at every tounes ende.

Tho spake our Hoste, A, Sire, ye shuld ben hende

v. 6858. *Auctoritees*] *Auctoritas* was the usual word for what we call a text of Scripture, *inf. H. n. l.* 106, 107: "Expositio *auctoritatis*, Majus gaudium super uno peccatore." *Ibid.* 21, "Exposito *auctoritatis*, Stetit populus de longe," 35 c.

And curteis, as a man of your estat,
 In compaignie we wiln have no debat : 6870
 Telleth your Tale, and let the Sompnour be.
 Nay, quod the Sompnour, let him say by me
 What so him list ; whan it cometh to my lot
 By God I shal him quiten every grot ;
 I shal him tellen which a gret honour 6875
 It is to be a flatering limitour,
 And eke of many another maner crime,
 Which nedeth not reherfen at this time,
 And his office I shal him tell ywis.
 Our Hoste answered, Pees, no more of this. 6880
 And afterward he said unto the Frere
 Tel forth your Tale min owen maister dere.

THE FRERES TALE.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in my contree
 An archedecken, a man of high degree,
 That boldely did execution 6885
 In punysshing of fornication,
 Of witchecraft, and eke of bauderie,
 Of defamacion, and aventerie,
 Of chirche-reves, and of testaments,
 Of contracts, and of lack of sacraments, 6890
 Of usure, and of simonie also,
 But certes lechours did he gretest wo ;

[The Frere's Tale.] A Sompnour and the devil meeting on the way, after conference become sworn brethren, and talk of their craft together. A covert *invective* against the bribery and corruption of the spiritual courts in those days. (1300.)

They shulden sigen if that they were hent,
 And smale tithes weren soule yhent;
 If any persone wold upon hem plaine . . . 6895
 Ther might astert hem no pecounial peine.
 For smale tithes and smale offering
 He made the peple pitoufly to sing,
 For er the bishop hent hem with his crook
 They weren in the archedekens book; . . . 6900
 Than had he thurgh his jurisdiction
 Power to don on hem correction.

He had a Sompnour redy to his hond,
 A slier boy was non in Englelond;
 For subtilly he had his espaille, . . . 6905
 That taught him wel wher it might ough availle.
 He coude spare of lechours on or two
 To techen hem to foure-and-twenty mo:
 For though this Sompnour wold be as an hare,
 To tell his harlotrie I wol not spare, . . . 6910
 For we ben out of hir correction,
 They han of us no jurisdiction,
 Ne never shul have, terme of all hir lives.

Peter, so ben the women of the flives,
 Quod this Sompnour, yput out of our cure? . . . 6915

Pees, with mischance and with misaventure,
 Our Hoste said, and let him tell his Tale.
 Now telleth forth, and let the Sompnour gale,
 Ne spaireth not, min owen maister dere.

This false thief, this Sompnour, quod the Frere,

Had alway baundes redy to his hond, 6998
 As any hauke to lure in Englelond,
 That told him all the secree that they knewe,
 For hir acquaintance was not come of newe;
 They weren his approvers prively : 6925
 He tooke himself a gret profit therby,
 His maister knew not alway what he wan.
 Withouten mandement a lewed man
 He coude sompne up peine of Cristes curse,
 And they were inly glad to fille his purse, 6930
 And maken him gret feltes at the nale.
 And right as Judas hadde purses smale,
 And was a theef, right swiche a theef was he;
 His master hadde but half his duetee.
 He was (if I shal yeven him his laud) 6935
 A theef, and eke a Sompnour, and a baud.
 He had eke wenches at his retenue,
 That whether that Sire Robert or Sire Hue,
 Or Jakke or Rauf, or who so that it were
 That lay by hem, they told it in his ere. 6940
 Thus was the wenche and he of on assent;
 And he wold secche a feined mandement,
 And sompne hem to the chapitre bothe two,
 And pill the man and let the wenche go :
 Than wold he say, Frend, I shal for thy sake 6945
 Do strike thee out of oure lettres blake;

†. 6931. *the nale*] The alehouse, P. P. fol. 32, b.;

And than fatten some and songe at *the nale*.

Skinner supposes it to be a corruption of *inn-ale*, which is not impossible. See *Gloss.* in v. *Nale*.

Volume III.

F

Thee thar no more as in this cas travaille;
 I am thy frend ther I may thee availle.
 Certain, he knew of briboures many mo
 Than possible is to tell in yeres two; 695e
 For in this world n'is dogge for the bowe
 That can an hurt dere from an hole yknowe
 Bet than this Sompnour knew a flie lechoar,
 Or an avoutrer or a paramour,
 And for that was the fruit of all his rent, 695i
 Therfore on it he fet all his entent.

And so befell that ones on a day
 This Sompnour, waiting ever on his pray,
 Rode forth to sompne a widewe, an olde ribibe,
 Feining a caufe, for he wold han a bribe; 696
 And happed that he saw befor him ride
 A gay yeman under a foreft side;
 A bow he bare, and arwes bright and kene,
 He had upon a courtepy of grene,
 An hat upon his hed with frenges blake. 6

Sire, quod the Sompnour, haile, and wel atak

&c. 6959. *an olde ribibe*] He calls her below, ver. 715
olde ribikke. They were both names for the same music
 instrument. See *Messie*, in v. *Kelce*. *Ribibe*, in *The Decu*
ix. 5. is rendered by Macon, the old French translator
 and *guiterne*. Chaucer uses also the diminutive *ribibl*
 3331, 4395. How this instrument came to be put for
 woman I cannot guess, unless perhaps from its similar
 old writer, quoted by *Du Cange*, in v. *Bard* 33, has the
 ing lines in his description of a concert;

Quidam rebicam arcuabant
Malibrem vocem conjungentes.

Welcome, quod he, and every good felaw,
Whider ridest thou under this grene shaw?
(Saide this yeman) wolt thou fer to-day?

This Sompnour him answerd, and saide Nay. 6970
Here falle by (quod he) is min entent
To riden, for to reisen up a rent
That longeth to my lordes ductee.

A! art thou than a baillif? Ye, quod he.
(He dorste not for veray filth and shame 6975
Say that he was a Sompnour for the name.)

De par dieux. quod this yeman, leve brother,
Thou art a baillif, and I am another,
I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thin acquaintance I wol prayen thee, 6980
And eke of brotherhed, if that thee list.
I have gold and silver lying in my chist;
If that thee hap to come in to our flure
Al shal be thin, right as thou wolt desire.

Grand mercy, quod this Sompnour, by my faith.
Everich in others hond his trouthe lairh 6986
For to be sworne brethren til they dey.
In daliaunce they riden forth and pley.

This Sompnour, which that was as ful of jangles
As ful of venime ben thise wariangles, 6990

☆. 6990. *wariangles*] I have nothing to say either in refutation or support of Mr. Speght's explanation of this word—
“A kind of birds full of noise, and very ravenous, preying upon others, which when they have taken they use to hang upon a thorne or pricke, and teare them in peeces, and de-

And ever enquering upon every thing,
 Brother, quod he, wher is now your dwelling,
 Another day if that I shuld you seeche?

This yeman him answerd in softe speche,
 Brother, quod he, fer in the north contree, 6995
 Wheras I hope somtime I shal thee see.
 Or we depart I shal thee so wel wisse,
 That of min hous ne shalt thou never misse.

Now brother, quod this Sompnour, I you pray
 T'eeche me, while that we riden by the way, 7000
 (Sith that ye ben a baillif as am I)
 Som subtiltee, and tell me faithfully
 In min office how I may moste winne;
 And spareth not for conscience or for sinne,
 But as my brother tell me how do ye. 7005

Now by my trouthe, brother min, said he,
 As I shal tellen thee a faithful Tale.
 My wages ben ful streit and eke ful smale;
 My lord is hard to me and dangerous,
 And min office is ful laborious, 7010
 And therfore by extortion I leve;
 Forsoth I take all that men wol me yeve:
 Al gates by sleighte or by violence
 Fro yere to yere I win all my dispence:

"vour them; and the common opinion is that the thorne
 "whereupon they thus fasten them and eat them is afterward
 "poisonfome. In Staffordshire and Shropshire the name is com-
 "mon"—except that Cotgrave, in his *Fr. Dict.* explains *ar-*
near to signify the ravenous bird called a shrike, nymmurder,
tearingle. See *Gloss.* in v. *Wariangles*.

I can no better tellen faithfully. 7015

Now certes (quod this Sompnour) fere I;

I spare not to taken, God it wote,

But if it be to hevy or to hote.

What I may gete in conseil prively

No maner conscience of that have I. 7020

N'ere min extortion I might not liven,

Ne of swiche japes v

Stomak ne conscienc

I shrew thise shrifte

Wel be we met by C. 7025

But, leve brother, t

Quod this Sompnour in this mene while

This yeman gan a lither to inile.

Brother, quod he, wolt thou that I thee tell?

I am a fend, my dwelling is in hell, 7030

And here I ride about my pourchasing

To wote wher men wol give me any thing :

My pourchas is th' effect of all my rent,

Loke how thou ridest for the same entent :

To winnen good thou rekkest never how : 7035

Right so fare I, for riden wol I now

Unto the worldes ende for a praye

A, quod this Sompnour, benedicite ! what say ye?

I wend ye were a yeman trewely,

Ye have a mannes shape as wel as I. 7040

¶ 7018. *to hevy or to hote*] We have nearly the same expression in *Frøgtter*, v. i. c. 219, "ne laissoient riens a prendre, s'il n'estoit trop chaud, trop froid, ou trop pesant."

Have ye than a figure determinat
In helle, ther ye ben in your estat ?

Nay certainly, quod he, ther have we non,
But whan us liketh we can take us on,
Or elles make you wene that we ben shape 7045
Somtime like a man, or like an ape,
Or like an angel can I ride or go;
It is no wonder thing though it be so;
A lousy jogelour can deceiven thee,
And parde yet can I more craft than he. 7050

Why, quod the Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In fondry shape, and not alway in on ?

For we, quod he, wol us swiche forme make
As most is able our preye for to take.

What maketh you to han al this labour ? 7055

Ful many a cause, leve Sire Sompnour,
Saide this fend. But alle thing hath time;
The day is short, and it is passed prime,
And yet ne wan I nothing in this day;
I wol entend to winning if I may, 7060
And not entend our thinges to declare;
For, brother min, thy wit is al to bare
To understand, although I told hem thee.
But for thou axest why labouren we ?
For somtime we be Goddes instruments, 7065
And menes to don his commandements,
Whan that him list, upon his creatures,
In divers actes and in divers figures :

Withouten him we have no might certain,
 If that him list to stonden theragain. 7070
 And som time at our praierē han we leve
 Only the body and not the soule to greve;
 Witnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo,
 And somtime han we might on bothe two,
 This is to fain, on soule and body eke : 7075
 And somtime be we suffered for to seke
 Upon a man, and don his soule unreste
 And not his body, and all is for the beste.
 Whan he withstandeth our temptation
 It is a cause of his salvation, 7080
 Al be it that it was not our entente
 He shuld be sauf, but that we wold him hente.
 And somtime be we servants unto man,
 As to the Archebishop Seint Dunstan,
 And to the apostle servant eke was I. 7085
 Yet tell me, quod this Sompnour, faithfully,
 Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
 Of elements? The fend answered Nay.
 Somtime we seine, and somtime we arise
 With ded bodies, in ful sondry wise, 7090
 And speke as renably, and faire, and wel,
 As to the Phitonesse did Samuel;

†. 7092. *As to the Phitonesse did Samuel*] 80 mf. *A.*; the
 edit. read,

As the Phitonesse did to Samuel—
 which is certainly wrong. See 1 *Sam.* xxviii. Our Author uses
Phitonesse for *Pytbonesse*, *H. B.* iii. 171; and so does Gower,
Conf. Amant. fol. 140;

The Phitonesse in Samary.—

And yet wol som men say it was not he :
 I do no force of your divinitee.
 But o thing warne I thee, I wol not jape, 7095
 Thou wolt algates wete how we be shape :
 Thou shal herafterward, my brother dere,
 Come wher thee nedeth not of me to lere,
 For thou shalt by thin owen experience
 Conne in a chaire rede of this sentence 7100
 Bet than Virgile, while he was on live,
 Or Dant also. Now let us riden blive,
 For I wol holden compaignie with thee
 Til it be so that thou forsake me.

Nay, quod this Sompnour, that shal never betide.
 I am yeman known is ful wide ; 7106
 My trouthe wol I hold, as in this cas ;
 For though thou were the devil Sathanas
 My trouthe wol I hold to thee, my brother,
 As I have sworne, and eche of us to other, 7110
 For to be trewe brethren in this cas,
 And bothe we gon abouten our pourchas.
 Take thou thy part, what that men wol thee yeve,
 And I shal min, thus may we bothe leve ;
 And if that any of us have more than other 7115
 Let him be trewe, and part it with his brother.

I graunte, quod the devil, by my fay.
 And with that word they riden forth hir way,
 And right at entring of the tounes ende
 To which this Sompnour shope him for to wende

They saw a cart that charged was with
 Which that a carter drove forth on his
 Depe was the way, for which the cart
 The carter smote, and cried as he were good,
 Heit Scot, heit Brok; what, spare ye for the stones?
 The fend (quod he) you secche body and bones, 7126
 As ferforthly as ever ye were soled,

So mochel wo as I have
 The devil have al, bnd hay.
 The Sompnour sa ve a pray;
 And nere the fend h were, 7131
 Ful prively, and rou
 Herken my brother;
 Herest thou not how the carter saith?

Hent it anon, for he may yeve it thee, 7135
 Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.

Nay, quod the devil, God wot never a del;
 It is not his entente, trust thou me wel:
 Axe him thyself, if thou not trowest me,
 Or elles stint a while and thou shalt see. 7140

This carter thakketh his hors upon the croupe,
 And they begonne to drawen and to floupe.
 Heit now, quod he; ther, Jesu Crist you bleffe,
 And all his hondes werk bothe more and lesse!
 That was wel twight, min owen Liard boy, 7145
 I pray God save thy body and Seint Eloy.

¶ 7145. *Liard*] A common appellative for a horse, from its
 grey colour, as *Bayard* was from *bay*. [See before, ver. 4113.]
P. P. fol. 92;

He lyght downe of *Liarde* and ladde him in his hand.

Now is my cart out of the slough parde.

Lo, brother, quod the fend, what told I thee?
Here may ye seen, min owen dere brother,
The cheel spake o thing but he thought another.
Let us go forth abouten our viage; 7151
Here win I nothing upon this cariage.

Whan that they comen somewhat out of tooun
This Sompnour to his brother gan to roun;
Brother, quod he, here woneth an bld rebeke 7153
That had almost as lefe to lese hire nekke
As for to yere a peny of hire good.
I wol have twelf pens though that she be wood,
Or I wol forsaue hire to our office,
And yet, God wet, of hire know I do vice; 7160
But for thou canst not as in this contrec.
Winner thy cost, take here example of me.

This Sompnour clappeth at the wilcwe's gate;
Come out, he sayd; thou olde very trate;
I trow thou hast som frete or preest with thee. 7163
Who clappeth? said this wif, benedicite!
God save you, Sire, what is your swete will?

I have, quod he, of somous here a bill:
Up peine of cursing loke that thou be
To-morwe before the archedekenes knee, 7170

Bishop Douglas, in his *Virgil*, usually puts *hart* for *albus*, *incanus*, &c.

*. 7164. [thou olde very trate] So mss. C. 1, A. B. 1, 2, and ed. Ca. 2. The later editt. read *viritate*, in one word. We may suppose *trate* to be used for *trat*, a common term for an old woman. Keyser [*Antiq. Sept.* p. 503.] refers it to the same original with the German *drud* or *drut*, *saga*.

To answer to the court of certain things.

Now Lord, quod she, Crist Jesu, King of kinges,
So wisely helpe me as I ne may :

I have ben sike, and that ful many a day :

I may not go so fer (quod she) ne ride 7175

But I be ded, so priketh it in my side.

May I not axe a libel, Sire Sompnour,

And answer ther by my procuratour

To swiche thing as men wold apposen me ?

Yes, quod this Sompnour, pay anon, let see, 7180

Twelf pens to me, and I wol thee acquite :

I shal no profit han therby but lite ;

My maister hath the profit and not I.

Come of, and let me riden hastily ;

Yeve me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie. 7185

Twelf pens ! quod she : now Lady Seint Marie

So wisely helpe me out of care and sinne,

This wide world though that I shuld it winne,

Ne have I not twelf pens within my hold. .

Ye knowen wel that I am poure and old ; 7190

Kithe your almesse upon me poure wretche.

Nay than, quod he, the foule fend me fetch

If I thee excuse, though thou shuldest be spilt.

Alas ! quod she, God wot I have no gilt.

Pay me, quod he, or by the swete Seinte Anne

As I wol bere away thy newe panne 7196

For dette which thou owest me of old

Whan that thou madest thyn husbond cokewold

I paid at home for thy correction.

Thou liest, quod she, by my salvation; 7200

Ne was I never or now, widow ne wif;

Sompned unto your court in all my lif;

Ne never I n'as but of my body trowe.

Unto the devil rough and blake of hewe

Yeve I thy body and my panne also. 7205

And whan the devil herd hire cursen so

Upon hire knees, he sayd in this manere;

Now Mabily, min moder dere,

Is this your will in earnest that ye sey?

The devil, quod she, so fetche him or he dey, 7210

And panne and all, but he wol him repent.

Nay, olde stot, that is not min entent,

Quod this Sompnour, for to repenten me

For any thing that I have had of thee:

I wold I had thy smok and every cloth. 7215

Now brother, quod the devil, be not wroth;

Thy body and this panne ben min by right:

Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,

Wher thou shalt knowen of our privetee

More than a maister of divinitee. 7220

And with that word the foule fend him hent

Body and soule: he with the devil went

Wher as thise Sompnours han hir heritage:

And God, that maketh after his image

Mankinde, save and gide us all and some, 7225

And leue this Sompnour good man to become.

Lordings, I conde have told you (quod this Frere)
 Had I had leiser for this Sompnour here;
 After the text of Crist, and Poule, and John,
 And of oure other doctours many on,
 Swiche peines that your hertes might agrise,
 Al be it so that no tonge may devise,
 Though that I might a thousand winter tell,
 The peines of thilke cursed hous of hell:
 But for to kepe us fro that cursed place,
 Waketh and prayeth Jesu of his grace,
 So kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
 Herkneþ this word, beware as in this cas;
 The leon sit in his awaite alway
 To sle the innocent if that he may.
 Disposeth ay your hertes to withstonde
 The fend, that you wold maken thral and bond;
 He may not tempten you over your might,
 For Crist wol be your champion and your knight;
 And prayeth that this Sompnour him repent
 Of his misdedes or that the fend him hent.

THE SOMPNOURES PROLOGUE.

THus Sompnour in his stirops high he stood;
 Upon this Frere his herte was so wood,
 That like an aspen leef he quoke for ire,
 Lordings, quod he, but o thing I desire;
 I you besече that of your curtesie,
 Sin ye han herd this false Frere lie,

As suffereth me I may my Tale telle.

This Frere booteh that he knoweth helle,
And God it wot that is but litel wonder; 7255
Freres and fendes ben but litel asonder.

For parda ye han often time herd telle
How that a frere ravished was to helle
In spirit ones by a visioun,
And as an angel lad him up and down, 7260
To shewen him the peines that ther were,
In all the place saw he not a frere;
Of other folk he saw ynow in wo.

Unto this angel spake the frere tho;
Now Sire, quod he, han freres swiche a grace 7265
That non of hem shal comen in this place?

Yes, quod this angel, many a millioun;
And unto Sathanas he lad him down.
(And now hath Sathanas, saith he, a tayl
Broder than of a carrike is the sayl) 7270

Hold up thy tayl, thou Sathanas, quod he,
Shew forth thin ers, and let the frere see
Wher is the nest of freres in this place.
And er than half a furlong way of space,
Right so as bees out swarmen of an hive, 7275
Out of the devils ers ther gonnen drive
A twenty thousand freres on a route,
And thurghout hell they swarmed al aboute,

*. 7269. (*And now hath Sathanas, saith he*] 80 mss. C. r, A/A. 1, 2. I have put these two lines in a parenthesis, as *he* refers to the narrator, the Sompneur.

*. 7277. [*A twenty thousand*] I have added *A* for the sake of

And com agen, as fast as they may gon,
 And in his ers they crepen everich on : 7280
 He clapt his tayl agen, and lay ful still.

This frere, whan he loked had his fill
 Upon the turments of this fory place,
 His spirit God restored of his grace
 Into his body agen, and he awoke ; 7285
 But natheles for fere yet he quoke,
 So was the devils ers ay in his mind,
 That is his heritage of veray kind.

God save you alle save this cursed Frere ;
 My Prologue wol I end in this manere. 7290

THE SOMPNOURES TALE.

LORDINGS, there is in Yorkshire, as I gesse,
 A mersh contree ycalled Holderneffe,
 In which ther went a limitour aboute,
 To preche and eke to beg it is no doute.
 And so befell that on a day this frere 7295
 Had preched at a chirche in his manere,
 And specially aboven every thing
 Excited he the peple in his preching

the verse. Chaucer frequently prefixes it to nouns of number.
 See ver. 10637 ;

And up they risen, wel a ten or twelve.

[*The Sompnours Tale*] A begging friar coming to a farmer's house who lay sick, obtaineth of the sick man a certain legacy which must be equally divided among his convent. A requital to the friar, shewing their cozenage, loitering, impudent begging, and hypocritical praying.

To trentals, and to yeve for Golden sake,
 Wherwith men mighten holy houses make, 7300
 Ther as divine service is honoured,
 Not ther as it is wasted and devoured,
 Ne ther it nedeth not for to be yeven,
 As to possessorers, that mowen leuen
 (Thanked be God) in wele and abundance. 7305
 Trentals, sayd he, deliveren fre penance
 Hir frendes soules as wel olde as yonge,
 Ye, whan that they ben hastily yfonge,
 Not for to hold a prest jolif and gay,
 He singeth not but o masse on a day. 7310
 Delivereth out (quod he) anon the soules:
 Ful hard it is with fleshook or with oules
 To ben ychawed, or to bren or bake.
 Now spede you hastily for Cristes sake.

And whan this frere had said all his entent, 7315
 With *qui cum patri* forth his way he went.
 Whan folk in chirche had yeve him what hem list
 He went his way, no lenger wold he rest.
 With scrippe and tipped staf, ytucked hie,
 In every hous he gan to pore and prie, 7320
 And begged mele and chese, or elles corn.
 His felaw had a staf tipped with horn,
 A pair of tables all of ivory,
 And a pointel ypolished fetisly,

†. 7299. To trentals.] Un trentel, Fr. was a service of thirty masses, which were usually celebrated upon as many different days, for the dead. Du Cange, in v. Trentale.

And wrote alway the names, as he stood, 7325
 Of alle folk that yave hem any good,
 Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye.
 Yeve us a buschel whete, or malt or reye,
 A Goddes kichel, or a trippe of chese,
 Or elles what you list, we may not chese; 7330

¶ 7327. *Askaunce that he wolde for hem preye*] The Glossary interprets *askaunce* to mean askew, aside, sideways, in a side view, upon what authority I know not. It will be better to examine the other passages in which the same word occurs before we determine the sense of it. See ver. 16306;

Askaunce that craft is so light to lere.

Tro. l. 285;

Askaunce, lo! is this not wisely spoken?

Ibid. 292;

Askaunce, what! may I not stonde here?

Lydg. Trag. fol. 136, b.;

Askaunce I am of maners most chaungeable.

In the first and last instance, as well as in the text, *askaunce* seems to signify simply *as if*, *quasi*; in the two others it signifies a little more, *as if to say*. This latter signification may be clearly established from the third line, which in the Italian original [*Philoftrato di Boccaccio*, l. 1.] stands thus;

Quasi dicere, e no ci si puo stare?

So that *askaunce* is there equivalent to *quasi dicere* in Italian.—As to the etymology of this word, I must confess myself more at a loss. I observe however that one of a similar form, in the Teut. has a similar signification. *Als-kacks*, *quasi*, *quaj*; *vero*, Kilian. Our *as* is the same with *als*, Teut. and Sax.; it is only a further corruption of *also*. Perhaps therefore *askaunce* may have been originally *als-kansse*. *Kansse*, in Teut. is *chance*, Fr. and Eng.—I will just add that this very rare phrase was also used, as I suspect, by the author of *The Continuation of The Canterbury Tales*, first printed by Mr. Urry. *Prol. ver. 361*;

And al *askaunce* she loved him wel, she toke him by the swere.
 It is printed a *saunce*.

¶ 7329. *A Goddes kichel*] “It was called *A Goddes kichel*,

A Goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny;
 Or yeve us of your braun, if ye have any,
 A dagon of your blanket, leve Dame;
 Our suster dere, (lo, here I write your name)
 Bacon or beef, or swiche thing as ye find. 7338

A sturdy harlot went hem ay behind,
 That was her hostes man, and bare a sakke,
 And what men yave hem laid it on his bakke.
 And whan that he was out at dore, anon
 He planed away the names everich on 7340
 That he before had written in his tables:
 He served hem with nisses and with fables.

Nay, ther thou lieſt, thou Sompnour, quod the Frere.
 Pees, quod our Hoste, for Cristes moder dere
 Tell forth thy Tale, and spare it not at all. 7345

So thrive I, quod this Sompnour, so I shall.

So long he went fro hous to hous, til he
 Came to an hous ther he was wont to be
 Refreshed more than in a hundred places.
 Sike lay the hufbond man whos that the place is;

"because godfathers and godmothers used commonly to give
 "one of them to their godchildren when they asked bless-
 "ing," *Sp.* And so we are to suppose a *Goddes halfpeny*, in ver.
 7331, was called for the same reason, &c. But this is all *gratis*
dictum I believe. The phrase is French, and the true mean-
 ing of it is explained by M. de la Monnoye in a note upon the
Comes de B. D. Periers, t. ii. p. 107, *Belle serrure de Dieu*; "Ex-
 "pression du petit peuple, qui rapporte pieusement tout à Dieu.
 "—Rien n'est plus commun dans la bouche des bonnes vieilles,
 "que ces eſpeces d'Hebraïsmes: Il m'en coute un bel ecu de
 "Dieu; Il ne me reste que ce pauvre enfant de Dieu; Donnes
 "moi une benite aumône de Dieu."

Bedred upon a couche low he lay. 7351

Deus hic, quod he; O Thomas! frend, good day,
Sayde this frere all curtisly and soft.

Thomas, quod he, God yelde it you, ful oft
Have I upon this benche faren ful wele, 7355
Here have I eten many a mery mele.

And fro the benche he drove away the cat,
And laied adoun his potent and his hat,
And eke his scrip, and set himself adoun :
His felaw was ywalked into toun, 7360
Forth with with his knave, into that hostelrye
Wher as he shope him thilke night to lie.

O dere maister! quod this sike man,
How have ye faren sin that March began?
I saw you not this fourtene night and more. 7365

God wot, quod he, laboured have I ful fore,
And specially for thy salvation
Have I sayd many a precious orison,
And for our other frendes God hem bleffe.
I have this day ben at your chirche at messe, 7370
And said a sermon to my simple wit,

Not all after the text of holy writ,
For it is hard to you as I suppose,
And therefore wol I teche you ay the glose.
Glosing is a ful glorious thing certain, 7375

For letter sleth, so as we clerkes fain;
Ther have I taught hem to be charitable,
And spend hir good ther it is reasonable;

And ther I saw our dame; a! wher is she?

Yonder, I trow that in the yard she be, 7380
Sayde this man, and she wol come anon.

Ey maister, welcome be ye by Seint John,
Sayde this wif; how fare ye hertily?

This frere ariseth up ful curtisly,
And hire embraceth in his armes narwe, 7385
And kisseth hire swete, and chirketh as a sparwe.

With his lippen. Dame, quod he, right wel,
As he that is your servant every del.

Thanked be God that you yaf soule and lif
Yet saw I not this day so faire a wif 7390
In all the chirche, God so save me.

Ye God amende defaute, Sire, quod she,
Algate welcome be ye, by my fay.

Grand mercy, Dame, that have I found alway.
But of your grete goodnesse, by your leve, 7395

I wolde pray you that ye not you greve
I wol with Thomas speke a litel throw,
Thise curates ben so negligent and slow
To gropen tendrely a conscience.

In shrift, in preching, is my diligence 7400

And study, in Peters wordes and in Poules;
I walke and fishe Cristen mennes soules,
To yeld our Lord Jesu his propre rent;
To sprede his word is sette all min entent.

Now by your faith, o dere Sire! quod she, 7405
Chideth him wel for Seinte Charitee:

He is ay angry as is a pissefire;
 Though that he have all that he can desire;
 Though I him wrie a-night, and make him warm,
 And over him lay my leg and eke min arm, 7410
 He groneth as our bore lith in our stie:
 Other disport of him right non have I;
 I may not plesse him in no maner cas.

O Thomas, *jeu vous die*, Thomas, Thomas!
 This maketh the fend, this muste ben amended. 7415
 Ire is a thing that high God hath defended,
 And therof wol I speke a word or two.

Now maister, quod the wif, er that I go,
 What wol ye dine? I wol go therabout,

Now Dame, quod he, *jeu vous die sanz doute*, 7420
 Have I not of a capon but the liver,
 And of your white bred nat but a shiver,
 And after that a roasted pigges hed,
 (But I ne wolde for me no beest were ded)

Than had I with you homly sustenance; 7425

I am a man of little sustenance:

My spirit hath his fostring in the Bible;

My body is ay so ready and so penible

To waken that my stomak is destroyed;

I pray you, Dame, that ye be nought annoied 7430

Though I so frendly you my conseil shewe;

By God I n'old have told it but a few:

Now Sire, quod she, but o word er I go.

My child is ded within thise wekes two.

Sone after that ye went out of this toun. 7435
 His deth saw I by revelatioun,
 Sayde this frere, at home in our dortour.¹
 I dare wel sain that er than half an hour
 After his deth I saw him borne to blisse
 In min avision, so God me wisse; 7440
 So did our sextein and our fermerere,
 That han ben trewe freres fifty yere;
 They may now, God be thanked of his lone,
 Maken hir jubilee, and walke alone.
 And up I arose, and all our covent eke, 7445
 With mapy a tere trilling on our cheke,
 Withouten noise or clatering of belles,
Te deum was our song, and nothing elles,
 Save that to Crist I bade an orison,
 Thanking him of my revelation. 7450
 For, Sire and Dame, trusteth me right wel
 Our orisons ben more effectuel,
 And more we seen of Cristes secree thinges,
 Than borel folk, although that they be kinges.
 We live in poverte and in abstinence, 7455
 And borel folk in richeffe and dispence
 Of mete and drinke, and in hir foule delit:
 We han this worldes lust all in despit.

v. 7442. *fifty yere*] See *Du Cange*, in v. *Sempetæ*. Peculiar honours and immunities were granted by the rule of St. Benedict to those monks "qui quinquaginta annos in ordine exegerant, quos annum jubileum exegisse vulgo dicimus." It is probable that some similar regulation obtained in the other orders.

Lazar and Dives lividen diversely,
 And divers guerdon hadden they therby. 7460
 Who so wol pray he must fast and be clene,
 And fat his soule and make his body lene.
 We fare as sayth the apostle; cloth and food
 Sufficeth us though they be not ful good.
 The clenenesse and the fasting of us freres 7465
 Maketh that Crist accepteth our praieres.

Lo, Moises forty daies and forty night
 Fasted er that the high God ful of might
 Spake with him in the mountagne of Sinay:
 With empty wombe of fasting many a day 7470
 Received he the lawe that was written
 With Goddes finger: and Eli, wel ye witen,
 In Mount Oreb, er he had any speche
 With highe God, that is our lives leche,
 He fasted long, and was in contemplance. 7475

Aaron, that had the temple in governance,
 And eke the other preestes everich on,
 Into the temple whan they shulden gon
 To praien for the peple, and do servise,
 They n'olden drinken in no maner wise 7480
 No drinke which that might hem dronken make,
 But ther in abstinence pray and wake
 Lest that they deiden. Take heed what I say—
 But they be sobre that for the peple pray—
 Ware that I say—No more; for it sufficeth. 7485
 Our Lord Jesu, as holy writ deviseth,

Yave us ensample of fasting and praieres;
 Therfore we mendiaunte, we sely freres,
 Ben wedded to poverte and continence,
 'To charitee, humbleste, and abstinence, 7
 'To persecution for rightwisnesse,
 To weping, misericorde. and to clenenesse;
 And therefore may ye see that our praieres
 (I speke of us, we mendiaunte, we freres)
 Ben to the highe God more acceptable 7
 Than youre, with your festes at your table.

Fro Paradis first, if I shal not lie,
 Was man out chafed for his glotonie;
 And chaste was man in Paradis certain.
 But herken now, Thomas, what I shal sain : 7
 I have no text of it as I suppose,
 But I shal find it in a maner gloste;
 That specially our swete Lord Jesus
 Spake this by freres whan he sayde thus,
 Blessed be they that poure in spirit ben; 7
 And so forth all the gosepe may ye sen
 Whether it be liker our profession
 Or hirs that swimmen in possession.
 Fic on hir pompe, and on hir glotonie,
 And on hir lewednesse! I hem desie. 7

†. 2488. *mendiaunte*] In ms. *A.* it is *mendicantz*, both
 and below, ver. 7494, which reading, though not agreed
 analogy, is perhaps the true one, as I find the word could
 be spelled in the stat. 12 R. II. c. 7, §, 3, 13.

Me thinketh they ben like Jovinian,
 Fat as a whale, and walken as a swan;
 Al vinolent as botel in the spence;
 Hir praier is of ful gret reverence:
 When they for soules say the Psalm of Davit,
 Lo, bus they say, *Cor meum cruciavit.* 7515
 Who soloweth Cristes gospel and his lore
 But we, that humble ben, and chaste and pore,
 Workers of Goddes word, not auditours?
 Therfore right as an hauke upon a fours 7520
 Up springeth into the aire, right so praieres
 Of charitable and chaste besy freres
 Maken hir sours to Goddes eres two.
 Thomas, Thomas! so mote I ride or go,
 And by that lord that cleped is Seint Ive, 7525
 N'ere thou our broder shuldest thou not thrive.
 In our chapitre pray we day and night
 To Crist that he thee sende hele and might

§. 7511. *Jovinian*] Against whom St. Jerome wrote, or perhaps the supposed emperor of that name in the *Gesta Romanorum*, c. lix, whose story was worked up into a morality, under the title of *L'orgueil et presumption de l'Empereur Jovinian*, 19 personages. It was printed at Lyons 1551, 8vo, sur une vieille copie. Du Verdier, in v. *Jovinien*.—The same story is told of a Robert King of Sicily, in an old English poem, ms. Arl. 1701. Mr. Warton has given large extracts from an Oxford ms. as I suppose, of the same poem, *Hist. of Eng. Po.* p. 184. §. 7514. *of ful gret reverence*] The editt. have changed this *ful* into *ful*; but the reading of the ms. may stand, if it be understood ironically.
 Volume III.

Thy body for to welden hastily.

God wot, quod he, nothing therof sale I. 7530

As help me Crist, as I in fewe yeres

Have spended upon divers maner freres

Ful many a pound, yet fare I never the bet;

Certain my good have I almost beset:

Farewel my good, for it is al ago. 7535

The frere answered, O Thomas! dost thou so?

What nedeth you diverse freres to seche?

What nedeth him that hath a parfit leche

To sechen other leches in the toun?

Your inconstance is your confusion. 7540

Hold ye than me, or elles our covent,

To pray for you ben insufficient?

Thomas, that jape n'is not worth a mite;

Your maladie is for we han to lite.

A! yeve that covent half a quarter otes, 7545

And yeve that covent four-and-twenty grotes,

And yeve that frere a peny and let him go:

Nay, nay, Thomas, it may no thing be so.

What is a ferthing worth parted on twelve?

Lo, eche thing that is oned in himselve 7550

Is more strong than whan it is yscatered.

Thomas, of me thou shalt not ben yflatered,

Thou woldest han our labour al for nought.

'The highe God, that all this world hath wrought,

Saith that the workman worthy is his hire. 7555

'Thomas, nought of your tresor I desire

As for myself, but that all our covent
 To pray for you is ay so diligent,
 And for to bidden Cristes owen chirche.
 Thomas, if ye wol lernen for to wirche, 7560
 Of bilding up of chirches may ye finde
 If it be good in Thomas lif of Inde.

Ye ligen here ful of anger and of ire,
 With which the devil set your herte on fire,
 And chiden here this holy innocent, 7565
 Your wif, that is so good and patient;
 And therfore trow me, Thomas, if thee lest,
 Ne strive not with thy wif, as for the best.
 And bere this word away now by thy faith,
 Touching swiche thing, lo, what the wise saith: 7570

Within thy hous ne be thou no leon,
 To thy suggets do non oppression,
 Ne make thou not thin acquaintance to flee.

And yet, Thomas, eftsones charge I thee
 Beware from ire that in thy bosom slepeth; 7575
 Ware fro the serpent that so slyly crepeth
 Under the gras, and stingeth subtilly:
 Beware, my sone, and herken patiently
 That twenty thousand men han lost hir lives
 For striving with hir lemmans and hir wives. 7580
 Now sith ye han so holy and meek a wif,
 What nedeth you, Thomas, to maken strif?

Ther n'is ywis no serpent so cruel,
 Whan man tredeth on his tail, ne half so fel,

As woman is whan she hath caught an ire; 7585
 Veray vengeance is than all hire desire.

Ire is a sinne on of the grette seven,
 Abhominable unto the God of heven;
 And to himself it is destruction :
 This every lewed vicar and person 7590
 Can say how ire engendreth homicide :
 Ire is in soth executour of pride.

I coud of ire say so mochel forwe
 My Tale shulde lasten til to-morwe ;
 And therefore pray I God both day and night 7595
 An irous man God send him litel might.
 It is gret harm, and certes gret pitce,
 To sette an irous man in high degree.

Whilom ther was an irous potestat,
 As saith Senek, that during his estat 7600
 Upon a day out riden knightes two;
 And, as Fortune wold that it were so,
 That on of hem came home, that other nought.
 Anon the knight before the juge is brought,
 That saide thus; Thou hast thy felaw slain, 7605
 For which I deme thee to the deth certain.
 And to another knight commanded he,
 Go, lede him to the deth, I charge thee.
 And happed as they wenten by the wey
 Toward the place ther as he shulde dey, 7610

¶ 7600. *As saith Senek*] This story is told by *Seneca, de ira, l. i. c. xvi*, of Cn. Piso. It is also told of an emperor *Eraclius, Gesta Romanorum, cap. cxi.*

The knight came which men wenden he had be ded:
 Than thoughten they it was the beste re-
 To lede hem bothe to the juge again.
 They saiden, Lord, the knight ne hath not slain
 His felaw, here he stondeth hol alive. 7615

Ye shall be ded, quod he, so mot I thrive,
 That is to say, both on, and two, and thre.
 And to the firste knight right thus spake he.

I damned thee, thou art ded; 7620
 And thou also must be ded;
 For thou art cause why I am ded;
 And to the thridde knight he seyeth,
 Thou hast not don thy duty. 7625
 And thus he did do slen nem alle thre.

Irons Cambises was eke dronkelew, 7630
 And ay delighted him to ben a shrew:
 And so befell a lord of his meinie,
 That loved vertuous moralitee,
 Sayd on a day betwix hem two right thus;
 A lord is lost if he be vicious; 7635
 And dronkennesse is eke a foule record
 Of any man, and namely of a lord.
 Ther is ful many an eye and many an ere
 Awaiting on a lord, and he n'ot wher.
 For Goddes love drink more attemprely: 7640
 Win maketh man to lesen wretchedly

☆. 7625. *Irons Cambises*] This story is also in *Senecca*, l. iii. c. xiv.: it differs a little from one in *Herodotus*, l. iii.

His mind, and eke his limmes everich on.
 The revers shalt thou see, quod he, anon,
 And preve it by thyn owen experience
 That win ne doth to folk no swiche offence. 764
 Ther is no win bereveth me my might
 Of hond, ne foot, ne of min eyen fight.
 And for despit he dranke mochel more
 An hundred part than he had don before,
 And right anon this curfed irous wretche 764
 This knightes sone let before him fetchen,
 Commanding him he shuld before him stond;
 And sodenly he took his bow in hond,
 And up the streng he pulled to his ere,
 And with an arwe he slow the child right ther. 765
 Now whether have I a liker hond or non?
 Quod he; is all my might and minde agon?
 Hath win bereved me min eyen sight?
 What shuld I tell the answer of the knight?
 His son was slain, ther is no more to say. 765
 Beth ware therfore with lordes for to play,
 Singeth Placebo, and I shal if I can,
 But if it be unto a poure man:
 To a poure man men shuld his vices telle,
 But not to a lord, though he shuld go to helle. 766

765. *Singeth Placebo*] The allusion is to an anthem in the Roman church from *Psalms* cxvi. 9, which in the Vulgate stands thus; *Placebo Domino in regione vivorum*. Hence the complacent brother in 'The Merchant's Tale' is called *Placebo*.

Lo, irous Cirus, thilke Persien,
 How he destroyed the river of Gisen,
 For that an hors of his was dreint therein
 Whan that he wente Babilon to win:
 He made that the river was so smal 7665
 That wimmen might it waden over al.
 Lo, what, said he, that so wel techen can?

Ne be no felaw to non isons man,
 Ne with no wood man,
 Lest thee repent: I w 7670

Now Thomas, leve
 Thou shalt me find as
 Hold not the devils ki
 Thin anger doth thee all to fore imerte;
 But shew to me all thy confession. 7675

Nay, quod the like man, by Seint Simon
 I have ben shriven this day of my curat;
 I have him told al holly min estat.
 Nedeth no mo to speke of it, sayth he,
 But if me list of min humilitee. 7680

Yeve me than of thy gold to make our cloistre,
 Quod he, for many a muscle and many an oistre,

¶ 7662. *the river of Gisen*] It is called *Gynder* in *Seneca*, lib. cit. c. xxi, and in *Herodotus*, l. i.

¶ 7666. *That wimmen*] So the best mss. agreeably to the authors just quoted. The edit. have—

That men might ride and wade, &c.

Sir J. Mandeville tells the story of the Euphrates—"Because that he had sworn that he shoulde pisse the ryvere in suche poynt that a woman myghte wel passe there withouten castyng of oyl of hys clothes," p. 49.

Whan other men han ben ful wel at ese,
 Hath been our food, our cloistre for to rese;
 And yet, God wot, unneth the fundament ;
 Parfourmed is, ne of our pavement
 N'is not a tile yet within our wones:
 By God we owen fourty pound for stones.
 Now help, Thomas, for him that harwed helle,
 For elles mote we our bokes selle, 7
 And if ye laske oure predication,
 Than goth this world all to destruction;
 For who so fro this world wold us bereve,
 So God me save, Thomas, by your leve
 He wold bereve out of this world the sonne; 7
 For who can teche and worken as we conne?
 And that is not of litel time (quod he)
 But sithen Elie was and Elisee
 Han freres ben, that find I of record,
 In charitee, ythanked be our Lord. 7
 Now Thomas, help for Seinte Charitee.

And doun anon he sette him on his knee.

This fike man woxe wel neigh wood for ire;
 He wolde that the frere had ben a-fire
 With his false dissimulation. 7

Swiche thing as is in my possession,
 Quod he, that may I yeve you, and non other.
 Ye fain me thus, how that I am your brother.
 Ye certes, quod this frere, ye truisteth wel;
 I took our dame the letter of our sele. 7

*. 7710. *the letter of our sele*] There is a letter of this

Now wel, quod he, and foruwhat shal I yeve
 Unto your holy covent while I live;
 And in thin houd thou shalt it have anon,
 On this condition, and other non,
 That thou depart it so, my dere brother, 7715
 That every frere have as moche as other:
 This shalt thou swere on thy profession
 Withouten fraud or cavilation.

I swere it, quod the frere, upon my faith;
 And therwithal his hond in his he layth. 7720
 Lo here my faith; in me shal be no lak.

Than put thin hond adoun right by my bak,
 Saide this man, and grope wel behind
 Benethe my buttok, ther thou shalte find
 A thing that I have hid in privetee. 7725
 A! thought this frere, that shal go with me;
 And doun his hond he launcheth to the clifte,
 In hope for to finden ther a giste.

And whan this fike man felte this frere
 About his towel gropen ther and here, 7730
 Amid his hond he let the frere a fart:
 Ther n'is no capel drawing in a cart
 That might han let a fart of fwicke a soun.

The frere up sterte as doth a wood leoun:

In *Stevens, Supp. to Dugd.* vol. ii. *App.* p. 370; "Fratres Predicatores, Warwice. admittunt Thomam Cannings et uxorem ejus Agnetem ad participationem omnium honorum operum conventus ejusdem." It is under seal of the Prior, 4 *Non. Octob. An. Dom.* 1347.

A! false cherl, quod he, for Goddes bones 7735
 This haft thou in despit don for the nones :
 Thou shalt abide this fart if that I may.

His meinie, which that herden this affray,
 Came leping in, and chafed out the frere,
 And forth he goth with a ful angry chere, 7740
 And fet his felaw ther as lay his flore :
 He loked as it were a wilde bore,
 And grinte with his teeth, so was he wroth.
 A sturdy paa down to the court he goth,
 Wher as ther woned a man of gret honour, 7745
 To whom that he was alway confessor :
 This worthy man was lord of that village.
 This frere came, as he were in a rage,
 Wher as this lord sat eting at his bord :
 Unnethes might the frere speke o word, 7750
 Til atte last he saide, God you see!

This lord gan loke, and saide, *Benedicite!*
 What? Frere John, what maner world is this?
 I see wel that som thing ther is amis;
 Ye loken as the wood were ful of theves. 7755
 Sit down anon, and tell me what your greve is,

ψ. 7740.] The remainder of this Tale is omitted in mss. B. G. and Bod. C. and instead of it they give us the following lame and impotent conclusion;

He ne had nozt ellis for his sermon
 To part among his brethren when he cam home.
 And thus is this Tale idon,
 For we were almoȝt att the toun.

I only mention this to shew what liberties some copists have taken with our Author.

And it shal ben amended if I may.

I have, quod he, had a despit to day,
God yelde you, adoun in your village,
That in this world ther n'is so poure a page 7760
That he n'olde have abhominatioun
Of that I have received in youre toun ;
And yet ne greveth me nothing so fore
As that the olde cherl with lokkes hore
Blasphemed hath oure holy covent eke. 7765

Now maister, quod this lord, I you beseke.

No maister, Sire, quod he, but servitour,
Though I have had in scole that honour.
God liketh not that men us Rabi call
Neither in market ne in your large hall. 7770

No force, quod he, but tell me all your grefe.

Sire, quod this frere, an odious mischefe.
This day betid is to min ordre and me,
And so *per consequens* to eche degree
Of holy chirche, God amende it sone. 7775

Sire, quod the lord, ye wot what is to don :

Distempre you not, ye ben my confessour ;
Ye ben the salt of the erthe and the favour :
For Goddes love your patience now hold ;
Telle me your grefe. And he anon him told 7780
As ye han herd before, ye wot wel what.

The lady of the hous ay stille sat
Til she had herde what the frere said.

Ey, Goddes moder, quod she, blisful maid !



[Illegible handwritten text]

an impossible, it may not be
 aine chert. Gode be his sweete
 cymbing of a fere, and every fere,
 is but of aine murtheration,
 and ever it walketh fere and fere,
 hat a is no man can demere, by my fere,
 that it were departed equally.

What? Is my chert, is ye have fereously
 Unto my confessor to-day befpoke?
 I hold him certain a fereously.
 Now ete your mene, and be the chert ye fere,
 Let him go haunge himfelf a deuil way.

Now flood the lordes fquire and lord
 That carf his mete, and haunde wurd by wurd
 Of all this thing of which I haue you ferd.

My Lord, quod he, be ye not evil aquid;
 I coude telle for a gounne-cloth

To you, Sire Frere, be chat ye be not wroth, 7835
 How that this fere fould even yoked be
 Amonge your covett, if it liked chat.

Tell, quod the lord, and thou fere how anon
 A gounne-cloth, by God and by Seint John.

My Lord, quod he, whan that the wader is faire, 7836
 Withoute winde or pertourbing of aire,
 Let bring a cart-whele here into this hall,
 But loke that it have his fokes all;
 Twelf fokes hath a cart-whele commonly;
 And bring me than twelf freres, wete ye why? 7837

For threttene is a covent as I gesse;
 Your confessor here for his worthinesse
 Shal perfourme up the noubre of his covent.
 Than shall they knele adoun by on assent,
 And to every spokes end in this manere. 7845
 Ful sadly lay his nose shal a frere;
 Your noble confessor, ther God him save,
 Shal hold his nose upright under the naye.
 Than shal this cherl, with bely stif and tought,
 As any tabour, hider ben ybrought; 7850
 And set him on the whele right of this cart
 Upon the naye, and make him let a fart,
 And ye shall seen, ap'peril of my lif,
 By veray p'p' that is demonstratif,
 That equally the foun of it wol wende, 7855
 And eke she sinke, unto the spokes ende,
 Save that this worthy man, your confessor,
 (Because he is a man of gret honour)
 Shal han the firste fruit, as reson is.
 The noble usage of freres yet it is 7860
 The worthy men of hem shul first be served,
 And certaily he hath it wel deserved;
 He hath to-day taught us so mochel good,
 With preching in the pulpit ther he stood,
 That I may vouchesauf, I say for me, 7865
 He hadde the firste smel of fartes three,
 And so wold all his brethren hardely,
 He bereth him so faire and holyly.

d, the lady, and eche man, save the frere,
 at Jankin spake in this matere 7870
 Euclide or elles Ptholomee.
 the cherl they sayden, Subtiltee
 e wit made him speken as he spake;
 o fool ne no demoniake.
 in hath ywonne a newe goune.
 is don, we ben almost at toun. 7876

E CLERKES PROLOGUE.

rk of Oxenforde, our Hoste said,
 stille and coy as doth a maid
 ve spoused, sitting at the bord;
 ne herd I of your tonge a word. 7880
 studie abouten som sophime;
 ion saith that every thing hath time.
 es fake as beth of better chere,
 ne for to studien here.
 m mery Tale by your fay; 7885
 man that is entred in a play
 most unto the play assent.
 eth not, as freres don in Lent,
 us for our olde sinnes wepe,
 y Tale make us not to slepe. 7890

Were never spoused.] It has been observed in n. upon
 at Chaucer frequently omits the governing p
 his verbs: the instances there cited were not personal
 in this line, and some others which I shall point out
 latives *rel* or *which* are omitted in the same man-
 n. 7411, 13235, 16049.

Tell us som mery thing of adventures;
 Your termes, your coloures, and your figures,
 Kepe hem in store til so be ye endite
 Hie stile, as whan that men to kinges write.
 Speketh so plain at this time, I you pray,
 That we may understonden what ye say.

This worthy Clerk benignely answerde;
 Hoste, quod he, I am under your yerde,
 Ye have of us as now the governance,
 And therfore wolde I do you obeyfance,
 As fer as reson asketh hardely:
 I wol you tell a Tale which that I
 Lerned at Padowe of a worthy clerk,
 As preved by his wordes and his werk:
 He is now ded and nailed in his cheste,
 I pray to God so yeve his soule reste.

Fraunceis Petrark, the Laureat poete,
 Highte this clerk, whos rethorike fwete
 Enlumined all itaille of poetrie,
 As Lynyan did of philosophie

¶ 7910. *Lynyan*] Or *Linian*. The person meant was:
 nent lawyer, and made a great noise (as we say) in hi
 His name of late has been so little known that I believe
 has been angry with the editt. for calling him *Linian*.
 is some account of him in *Panzirrolus, de Cl. Leg. Interpre*
c. xxv.; "Joannes a *Lignano*, agri Mediolanensis vico,
 "dus, et ob id *Lignan*us dictus," &c. One of his works,
Tractatus de Bello, is extant in ms. *Reg. 12, B. ix.* He cc
 it at Bologna in the year 1360.-- He was not however
 lawyer; Chaucer speaks of him as excelling also in *phil*
 and so does his epitaph, *ap. Panzirol. l. c.*;

Or law, or other art particulere;
 But Deth, that wol not suffre us dwellen here,
 But as it were a twinkling of an eye,
 Hem both hath slaine, and alle we shul dye.

But forth to tellen of this worthy man 7915
 That taughte me this Tale as I began,
 I say that first he with highe stile enditeth
 (Or he the body of his Tale writeth)
 A proheme, in the which describeth he
 Piemont, and of Saluces the contree, 7920
 And speketh of Apennin the hilles hie,
 That ben the boundes of west Lumbardie,
 And of Mount Vesulus in special,
 Wher as the Poa out of a welle smal
 Taketh his firste springing and his fours, 7925
 That estward ay encrefeth in his cours
 To Emelic ward, to Ferare and Venise,
 The which a longe thing were to devise;

— — — — —
Gloria Lignani, titulo decoratus utroque,

Legibus et sacro Canone dives erat,

Alter Aristoteles, Hippocras erat et Ptolemaeus—

The only specimen of his philosophy that I have met with is in ms. *Harl.* 1006. It is an astrological work, entitled "Conclusiones Judicii compolice per Dominum Johannem de Lyriano [i. *Lyriano*] super coronacione Domini Urbani Pape VI. A. D. 1378, 18th April, &c. cum Diagrammate." He also supported the election of Urban as a lawyer, *Pansirel.* l. c. *et Annal. Eccles. a Raynaldi*, tom. xvii. He must therefore have lived at least to 1378, though in the printed epitaph he is said to have died in 1368, 16th Febr.

ψ. 7927. *To Emelic ward*] One of the regions of Italy was called *Æmilia*, from the *Æna Æmilia*, which crossed it from N. to

And trewely, as to my jugement,
 Me thinketh it a thing impertinent, 79
 Save that he wol conveyen his matere :
 But this is the Tale which that ye mow here.

THE CLERKES TALE.

THER is right at the west side of Itaille,
 Doun at the rote of Vefulus the cold,
 A lusty plain habundant of vitaille, 79
 Ther many a toun and towr thou maist behold,
 That founded were in time of fathers old,
 And many another delitable fighthe,
 And Saluces this noble contree highte.

A markis whilom lord was of that lond, 79
 As were his worthy elders him before,
 And obeyfant, ay redy to his hond,
 Were all his lieges bothe lesse and more :
 Thus in delit he liveth, and hath don yore,
 Beloved and drad, thurgh favour of Fortune, 79
 Both of his lordes and of his commune.

centia to Rimini. Placentia stood upon the Po, *Pirife. Lex. A Rom.* In v. *Via Emilia*. Petrarch's description of this part of the course of the Po is a little different. He speaks of it as viding the *Æmilian* and *Flaminian* regions from Venice—"Æt illam atque Flaminiam Venetiamque discriminans." But the Author's *Emilie* is plainly taken from him.—As the follow-
 Tale is almost wholly translated from Petrarch, [see the *I course*, § 20,] it would be endless to cite particular passages from the original, especially as it is printed in all the editions of Petrarch's works; it is there entitled *De Obsequiis Fide Uxorij Mythologia*.

The Clerk's Tale.] Walter the Marquis of Saluce proveth patience of his wife Grisild by three most tharp trials. Un

Verdader

Wichtige Taten

104

Botte, as speken of kinage,
 of Lombardie,
 and strong, and yong of age,
 war and of curteisie; 7950
 h, his contree for to gie,
 inges that he was to blame,
 was this yonge lordes namé.
 thus, that he considered nought
 g what might him betide, 7958
 present was all his thought,
 like and hunt on every side;
 other cures let he slide;
 old (and that was worst of all)
 if for ought that might befall. 7960
 oint his peple bare so fore
 on a day to him they went,
 n, that wisest was of lore,
 the lord wold best assent
 tell him what the peple ment, 7968
 he wel shew swiche matere)
 kis said as ye shull here.
 urkis! your humanitee
 d yeveth us hardinesse,
 is of necessitee 7970
 u now tell our hevinesse;
 rd, than of your gentillesse
 pitous herte unto you plaine,
 res nat my vois disdaine.

And trewely, as to my jugement,
 Me thiñketh it a thing impertinent,
 Save that he wol conveyen his matere :
 But this is the Tale which that ye mow here.

7930

THE CLERKES TALE.

THER is right at the west side of Itaille,
 Doun at the rote of Veselus the cold,
 A lusty plain habundant of vitaille,
 Ther many a toun and towr thou maist behold,
 That founded were in time of fathers old,
 And many another delitable fighthe,
 And Saluces this noble contree highte.

7935

A markis whilom lord was of that lond,
 As were his worthy elders him before,
 And obeyfant, ay redy to his hond,
 Were all his lieges bothe lesse and more :
 Thus in deliþ he liveth, and hath don yore,
 Beloved and drad, thurgh favour of Fortune,
 Both of hiþ lordes and of his commune.

7940

7945

centia to Rimini. Placentia stood upon the Po, *Pittic. Lex. Ant. Rom.* In v. *Via Emilia*. Petrarch's description of this part of the course of the Po is a little different. He speaks of it as dividing the Æmilian and Flaminian regions from Venice—"Æmiliam atque Flaminiam Venetiamque discriminans." But our Author's *Emilie* is plainly taken from him.—As the following Tale is almost wholly translated from Petrarch, [see the *Discourse*, § 20,] it would be endless to cite particular passages from the original, especially as it is printed in all the editions of Petrarch's works; it is there entitled *De Obedientiâ et Fide Uxorâ Mythologia*.

71. Clerk's Tale] Walter the Marquis of Saluce proveth the innocence of his wife Grisild by thre most sharp trials. Urry.

Therwith he was, to spoken of linage,
The gentilest yborne of Lumbardie,
A faire person, and strong, and yong of age,

And ful of honour and of curtesie; 7950
Discret ynough, his countres for to gie,
Stap in som thinges that he was to blame,
And Walter was this yonge lordes name.

I blame him thus, that he considered nought
In time coting what might him betide; 7955
But on his lust present was all his thought,
And for to haue and haue on every side;
Wel neigh all oþer cures let he stide;
And eke he n'old (and that was worst of all)
Wedden no wif for ought that might befall. 7960

Only that point his peple bare so fore
That flockmel on a day to him they went,
And on of hem, that wifest was of lore,
(Or elles that the lord wold best assent
That he shuld tell him what the peple ment, 7965
Or elles eond he wel shew swiche matere)
He to the markis said as ye shull here.

O noble Markis! your humanitee
Affureth us and yeveth us hardinesse,
As oft as time is of necessitee 7970
That we to you mow tell our hevinesse;
Accepteth, Lord, than of your gentillesse
That we with pitous herte unto you plaine,
And let your *ere nat my vois* disdaine.

Al have I not to don in this matere 7975
More than another man hath in this place,
Yet for as moch as ye, my Lord so dere,
Han alway shewed me favour and grace,
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience to shewen our request, 7980
And ye, my Lord, to don right as you lest.

For certes, Lord, so wel us liketh you
And all your werke, and ever have don, that we
Ne couden not ourself devisen how
We mighten live in more felicitee, 7985
Save o thing, Lord, if it your wille be
That for to be a wedded man you lest
Than were your peple in soverain hertes rest.

Boweth your nekke under the blisful yok
Of soveraintee, and not of servise, 7990
Which that men clepen Spousaile or Wedlok :
And thinketh, Lord, among your thoughtes wise,
How that our dayes passe in sondry wise ;
For though we slepe, or wake, or rome, or ride,
Ay fleth the time, it wol no man abide. 7995

And though your grene youthe floure as yet,
In crepeth age alway as still as ston,
And deth manafeth every age, and smit
In eche estat, for ther escapeth non :
And al so certain as we knowe eche on 8000
That we shul die, as uncertain we all
Ben of that day whan deth shal on us fall.

Accepteth than of us the trewe entent,
 That never yet refuseden your hest,
 And we wol, Lord, if that ye wol assent, 8005
 Chese you a wife in short time at the mest
 Borne of the gentillest and of the best
 Of all this lond, so that it oughte seme
 Honour to God and you, as we can deme.

Deliver us out of all this besy drede, 8010
 And take a wif for highe Goddes sake;
 For if it so befell, as God forbede,
 That thurgh your deth your linage shulde flake,
 And that a strange successeur shuld take
 Your heritage, o! wo were us on live; 8015
 Wherefore we pray you hastily to wive.

Hir meke praierc and hir pitous chere
 Made the markis for to han pitce.
 Ye wol, quod he, min owen peple dere,
 To that I never er thought constrainen me : 8020
 I me rejoyced of my libertee,
 That selden time is found in mariage;
 Ther I was free I moste ben in servage.

But natheles I see your trewe entent,
 And trust upon your wit, and have don ay; 8025
 Wherefore of my free will I wol assent
 To wedden me as sone as ever I may :
 But ther as ye han profred me to-day
 To chesen me a wif, I you relese
 That chois, and pray you of that profer cese. 8030

But for to speke of vertuous beautee,
Than was she on the fairest under sonne.
Ful pourely yfollered up was she;
No likerous lust was in hire herte yronne: 8090
Wel ofter of the well than of the tonne
She dranke; and for she wolde vertue please
She knew wel labour but non idel ese.

But though this mayden tendre were of age,
Yet in the bress of hire virginitee 8095
Ther was enclosed sad and ripe corage,
And in gret reverence and charitee
Hire olde poure fader fostred she:
A few sheep spinning on the feld she kept;
She wolde not ben idel til she slept. 8100

And whan she homward came she wolde bring
Wortes and other herbes times oft,
The which she shred and sethe for hire living,
And made hire bed ful hard and nothing soft;
And ay she kept hire fadres lif on loft 8105
With every obeisance and diligence
That child may don to fadres reverence.

Upon Grisilde, this poure creature,
Ful often fithis this markis sette his eye,
As he on hunting rode paraventure; 8110
And whan it fell that he might hire espie
He not with wanton loking of folie
His eyen cast on hire, but in sad wise
Upon hire chere he wold him oft avise;

Commending in his herte hire womanhede, 8115
 And eke hire vertue, passing any wight
 Of so yong age as wel in chere as dede :
 For though the peple have no gret insight
 In vertue, he considered ful right
 Hire bountee, and disposed that he wold 8120
 Wedde hire only if ever he wedden shold.

The day of wedding came, but no wight can
 Tellen what woman that it shulde be,
 For which marvaille wondred many a man,
 And saiden, whan they were in privetee, 8125
 Wol not our lord yet leve his vanitee ?
 Wol he not wedde ? Alas, alas the while !
 Why wol he thus himself and us begile ?

But natheles this markis hath do make
 Of gemmes sette in gold and in asure 8130
 Broches and ringes, for Grisildes sake ;
 And of hire clothing toke he the mesure
 Of a maiden like unto hire stature,
 And eke of other ornamentes all
 That unto swiche a wedding shulde fall. 8135

The time of underne of the same day
 Approcheth that this wedding shulde be,

†. 8136. *The time of underne*] The Glossary explains this rightly to mean the third hour of the day, or nine of the clock. In ver. 8957, where this word is used again, the original has *hora tertia* ; in this place it has—*hora prandii* : from whence we may collect that in Chaucer's time the third hour, or *underne*, was the usual hour of dinner.—I have never met with

Volume III.

K

and all the paleis put was in array,
 both halle and chambres, eche in his degree,
 Houses of office stuffed with plentee; 814
 Ther mayſt thou ſee of deinteous vitaille
 That may be found as fer as laſteth Itaille.

This real markis richely arraide,
 Lordes and ladies in his compaignie,
 The which unto the ſelte weren praide, 814
 And of his retenue the bachelerie,
 With many a ſoun of ſondry melodie,
 Unto the village of the which I told
 In this array the righte way they hold.

Grifilde of this (God wor) ful innocent 81
 That for hire ſhapen was all this array,
 To fetchen water at a welle is went,
 And cometh home as ſone as ever ſhe may;
 For wel ſhe had herd ſay that thilke day
 The markis ſhulde wedde, and if ſhe might
 She wolde ſayn han ſeen ſom of that fight.

She thought I wol with other maidens ſton
 That ben my felawes, in our dore, and ſee
 The markiffe, and therto wol I fond

any etymology of this word *undyrne*, but the follow-
 might lead one to ſuſpect that it had ſome referenc
men. "In the town-book belonging to the corporat
 "ford, 28 E. IV. It is ordyned that no perſon ope
 "or ſet ther corn to ſale, afore hour of ten of the
 "the *underrone* bell be ringyn." *Pet's Dict.* c
 v. p. 36. In the *Engl. Dict.* *undyrne* is render

To don at home, as sone as it may be, 8160
 The labour which that longeth unto me,
 And than I may at leiser hire behold,
 If she this way unto the Castel hold.

And as she wolde over the threswold gon
 The markis came and gan hire for to call, 8165
 And she set down hire water-pot anon
 Beside the threswold in an oxes stall,
 And down upon hire knees she gan to fall,
 And with sad countenance kneleth still,
 Til she had herd what was the lordes will. 8170

This thoughtful markis spake unto this maid
 Ful soberly, and said in this manere;
 Wher is your fader, Grisildis? he said.
 And she with reverence in humble chere
 Answered, Lord, he is al redy here. 8175
 And in she goth withouten lenger lette,
 And to the markis she hire fader sette.

He by the hond than toke this poure man,
 And saide thus whan he him had aside;
 Janicola, I neither may ne can 8180
 Lenger the plesance of min herte hide;
 If that thou vouchesauf, what so betide,
 Thy doughter wol I take or that I wend
 As for my wif unto hire lives end.

Thou lovest me, that wot I wel certain, 8185
 And art my faithful liegeman ybore,
 And all that liketh me, I dare wel sain,

It liketh thee, and specially therfore
 Tell me that point that I have said before,
 If that thou wolt unto this purpos drawe, 8190
 To taken me as for thy son in lawe?

This foden cas this man astoned so
 That red he wex, abaiß, and al quaking
 He stood; unnethes said he wordes no
 But only thus; Lord, quod he, my willing 8195
 Is as ye wol, ne ageins your liking
 I wol no thing, min owen Lord so dere;
 Right as you list governeth this matere.

Than wol I, quod this markis softely,
 That in thy chambre I, and thou, and she, 8200
 Have a collation; and wost thou why?
 For I wol ask hire if it hire wille be
 To be my wif, and reule hire after me?
 And all this shal he don in thy presence;
 I wol not speke out of thin audience. 8205

And in the chambre, while they were aboute
 The tretce, which as ye shul after here,
 The peple came into the hous withoute,
 And wondred hem in how honest manere
 Ententifly she kept hire fader dere: 8210
 But utterly Grisuldis wonder might,
 For never erst ne saw she swiche a fight.

No wonder is though that she be astoned
 To see so gret a gest come in that place,
 She never was to non swiche gestes woned, 8215

For which she looketh with full pale face,
 But hardly think this man to be to chase,
 This are the words that she the man she find
 To this hapless very faithful maid.

Grifilde, he said, ye shall wel understand 8220

It liketh to your father and to me
 That I you wedde, and che it may so stand,
 As I suppose, ye wol that it so be
 But this I demaundes of you I first (quod he)
 That sin it shal be don in hasty wise 8225
 Wol ye assent, or elles you avise?

I saye, be ye redy with good herte
 To all my lust, and that I freely may,
 As me best thinketh, do you laugh or smerte,
 And never ye to grutchea, night ne day, 8230
 And eke when I say Ya ye say not Nay,
 Nekkes by ward ne frowning countenance?
 Swere this, and here I swere our alliance.

Wondering upon this thing, quaking for drede,
 She saide, Lord, indigne and unworthy 8235

Am I to thilke honour that ye me bede,

● But as ye wol yourself right so wol I:

And here I swere that never willingly

In werk ne thought I n'ill you disobey
 For to be ded, though me were loth to deie. 8240

This is yough, Grifilde min, quod he.

And forth he goth with a ful sobre chere
 Out at the dore, and after than came she,

And to the peple he said in this manere;
 'This is my wif, quod he, that stondeþ here; 8245
 He noureth her, and loveth hire, I pray,
 Who so me loveth; ther n'is no more to say.

And for that nothing of hire olde gere
 She shulde bring into his hous, he had
 That women shuld despoilen hire right there, 8250
 Of which thise ladies weren nothing glad
 To handle hire clothes wherin she was clad:
 But natheles this maiden bright of hew
 Fro foot to hed they clothed han all new.

Hire heres han they kempt, that lay untressed
 Ful rudely, and with hir fingers smal 8256
 A coroune on hire hed they han ydressed,
 And sette hire ful of nouches gret and smal.
 Of hire array what shuld I make a tale?
 Unneth the peple hire knew for hire fairnesse 8260
 Whan she transmewed was in swiche richesse.

This markis hath hire spoused with a ring
 Brought for the same cause, and than hire sette
 Upon an hors snow-white and wel ambling,
 And to his palcis, or he lenger lette, 8265
 (With joyful peple that hire lad and mette)

* 8255. *ful of nou, her*] The common reading is *nouches*, but I have retained the reading of the best mss. as it may possibly assist somebody to discover the meaning of the word. I observe too that it is so written in the inventory of the effects of H. V. (see *Parl. Hist.* II. VI. n. 313: "Item 6 broches et 11 *l'her* d'or garniz de divers gainades pois 31d d'or pris 35s.

THE CLERKES

Conveyed hire; and thus the da
In revel til the sonne gan descende
And shortly forth this Tale folow
I say that to this newe markiselle
God hath swiche favour sent hire
That it ne seemeth not by likeliness
That she was borne and fed in rude
As in a cote or in an oxes stall,
But nourished in an emperours hall
To every wight she waxen is so de
And worshipful, that folk ther she w
And fro hire birthe knew hire yere b
Unnethes trowed they, but dorst han
That to Janicle, of which I spake befor
She doughter n'as; for as by conjecture
I sem thoughte she was another creatur
For though that ever vertuous was sh
he was encreased in swiche excellence
f thewes good, yset in high bountee,
id so discrete, and faire of eloquence,
benigne, and so digne of reverence,
I coude so the peples herte embrace,
t eche hire loveth that looketh on hire fa
ot only of Saluces in the town
ished was the bountee of hire name,
ke beside in many a regioun;
aith wel another saith the same:
deth of hire hie bountee the same,

That men and women, young as wel as old, **8295**
 Gon to Saluces upon hire to behold.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but really,
 Wedded with fortunat honestee,
 In Goddes peas liveth ful efly
 At home, and grace ynough outward had he: **8300**
 And for he saw that under low degree
 Was honest vertue hid, the peple him held
 A prudent man, and that is seen ful feld.

Not only this Grifilde thurgh hire wit
 Coude all the fets of wify hamlineffe, **8305**
 But eke whan that the cas required it
 The comune profit coude she redresse:
 Ther n'as discord, rancour, ne hevinesse,
 In all the lond that she ne coude appele,
 And wisely bring hem all in hertes ese. **8310**

Though that hire husbond absent were or nom
 If gentilmen or other of that contree
 Were wroth she wolde bringen hem at on.
 So wif and ripe wordes hadde she,
 And jugement of so grete equitee, **8315**
 That she from heven sent was, as men wend,
 Peple to save, and every wrong to amend.

Not longe time after that this Grifilde
 Was wedded she a daughter hath ybore,
 All had hire lever han borne a knave childe: **8320**
 Glad was the markis and his folk therfore,
 For though a maiden childe come all before

y unto a knave child atteine,
lyhed, sin she n'is not barreine.

Pars tertia.

fell, as it befalleth times mo, 8325
 hat this childe had souked but a throwe,
 arkis in his herte longed so
 pt his wif, hire sadnesse for to knowe,
 e ne might out of his herte throwe
 arveillous desir his wif to assay : 8330
 s, God wot, he thought hire to affray.
 ad assaied hire ynough before,
 und hire ever good : what nedeth it
 r to tempt, and alway more and more ?
 h som men praise it for a subtil wit ; 8335
 for me, I say that evil it fit
 y a wif whan that it is no nede,
 atten hire in anguish and in drede.
 which this markis wrought in this manere :
 ne a-night alone ther as she lay 8340
 terne face and with full trouble chere,
 yde thus, Grifilde, (quod he) that day
 you toke out of your poure array,
 at you in estat of high nobleffe,
 it not forgotten, as I gesse ; 8345
 , Grifilde, this present dignitee,
 ch that I have put you, as I trow,
 h you not forgetful for to be
 you toke in poure estat ful low,
 y wele ye mete yourselven know. 8350

Take hede of every word that I you say,
 Ther is no wight that hereth it but we tway.

Ye wote yourself wel how that ye came here
 Into this hous, it is not long ago,
 And though to me ye be right lefe and dere, 835f
 Unto my gentils ye be nothing so :
 They say to hem it is gret shame and wo
 For to be suggetes, and ben in servage
 To thee, that borne art of a smal linage.

And namely fin thy doughter was ybore 836a
 This wordes han they spoken douteles ;
 But I desire, as I have don before,
 To live my lif with hem in rest and pees :
 I may not in this cas be reccheles :
 I mote do with thy doughter for the best, 836b
 Not as I wold, but as my gentils left.

And yet, God wote. this is ful loth to me :
 But natheles withouten youre weting
 I wol nought do ; but thus wol I (quod he)
 That ye to me assenten in this thing ; 837a
 Now now youre patience in youre working
 For to me hight and swore in youre village
 The day that maked was our mariage.

So the he had herd all this she not amoved
 Ne word, ne word, in chere, ne countenance, 837b
 For she was not agrieved
 For he had, all ligh in your obissance ;
 And I with hertely obediens

And yet may save or spill
 nothing worketh after your will. 8380
 For nothing, for God my soule save,
 that may displese me;
 nothing for to have,
 nor life, save only ye:
 in myn herte, and ay shal be, 8385
 That or death may this deface,
 my courage to an other place.
 This mark is for hire answering,
 as he were not so;
 as his there and his loking, 8390
 he shuld out of the chambre go.
 his, a furlong way or two,
 hath told all his content
 to, and to his wif him sent.
 sergeant was this prive man, 8395
 he faithful often founden had
 get, and eke swiche folk wel can
 ion on thinges bad;
 new wel that he him loved and drad.
 this sergeant wist his lordes will 8400
 ambre he stalked him ful still.
 he sayd, ye mote foryeve it me
 lo thing to which I am constrained;
 wise, that right wel knowen ye
 s hestes may not ben yfeined; 8405
 wel be bewailed and complained,

THE CLERKES TALE,

hen mote nedes to hir lust obey,
so wol I; ther n'is no more to say.
his child I am commanded for to take.

spake no more, but out the child he hent 8410
pitously. and gan a chere to make,
though he wold have slain it or he went.
his must al suffer and al consent;
as a lambe she sitteth meke and still,
and let this cruel sergeant do his will. 8415
Suspectious was the diffame of this man,
suspect his face, suspect his word also,
suspect the time in which he this began:
Alas! hire doughter, that she loved so,
she wende he wold han slaien it right tho; 8420
But natheles she neither wept ne liked,
Conforming hire to that the markis liked.

But at the last to speken she began,
And mekely she to the sergeant praid
(So as he was a worthy gentilman) 8425
That she might kille hire child or that it deid;
And in hire barme this litel child she leid
With ful sad face, and gan the child to blisse,
And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she sayd in hire benigne vois; 8430
Farewel, my child, I shal thee never see,
But sin I have thee marked with the crois,
Of thilke fader yblessed mote thou be
That for us died upon a crois of tree.

Thy soule, litel child, I him betake, 8435
 For this night shalt thou dien for my sake.
 I trow that to a norice in this cas
 It had ben hard this routhe for to see;
 Wel might a moder than han cried Alas!
 But natheles so sad stedfast was she 8440
 That she endured all aduersitee,
 And to the sergeant mekely she sayde,
 Have here agen your litel yonge mayde.

Goth now (quod she) and doth my lordes hest :
 And o thing wold I pray you of your grace, 8445
 But if my lord forbade you at the lest,
 Burieth this litel body in som place
 That bestes ne no briddes it to-race.
 But he no word to that purpos wold say,
 But toke the child, and went upon his way. 8450

This sergeant came unto his lord again,
 And of Grisildes wordes and hire chere
 He told him point for point, in short and plain,
 And him presented with his doughter dere.
 Somwhat this lord hath routhe in his manere, 8455
 But natheles his purpos held he still,
 As lordes don whan they wol have hir will;

And bad this sergeant that he prively
 Shulde this child ful softe wind and wrappe,
 With alle circumstances tendrely, 8460
 And carry it in a cofre or in a lappe;
 But upon peine his hed of for to swappe

'That no man shulde know of his entent,
Ne when he came ne whider that he went;

But at Boloigne, unto his suster dere, 8465
'That thilke time of Pavie was Countesse,
He shuld it take and shew hire this matere,
Beseeching hire to don hire besineffe
This child to fostren in all gentilleffe;
And whos child that it was he hade hire hide 8470
From every wight, for ought that may betide.

This sergeant goth, and bath fulfild this thing.
But to this marquis now retorne we;
For now goth he ful fast imagining
If by his wives chere he mighte see, 8475
Or by hire wordes apperceive, that she
Were changed; but he never coud hire finde
But ever in on ylike sad and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as bely in service
And eke in love, as she was wont to be 8480
Was she to him in every maner wise;
Ne of hire doughter not a word spake she :
Non accident for non adversitee
Was seen in hire, ne never hire doughters name
Ne nevened she for ernest ne for game. 8485

ψ. 8466. *of Pavie*] When the text of this Tale was printed I had not sufficiently adverted to the reading of the best MSS. which is uniformly *Pavie*. I have little doubt that it should be *Pavie* both here and below, ver. 8631, 8814, &c. In French the name of the sister is said to be married to the Count de Paris; because it is *de Paris*.

parts.

Then foure yere

it as God wold

y this Waltere

to behold;

his fader told,

8490

atree mery

god they thonke and bery.

old, and from the bress

a day

another left

8495

er, if he may.

ed in assay :

en no mesure

stient creature.

ye han herd or this

8500

r mariage,

yboren is

r in al our age :

erte and my corage,

he vois so smerte

8505

hath myn herte.

han Walter is agon

nicle succede,

er han we non.

peple, it is no drede :

8510

armur taken hede,

L ij

For certainly I drede al swiche sentence,
Though they not plainen in myn audience.

I wolde live in pees if that I might ;
Wherefore I am disposed utterly, 8515
As I his suffer served er by night,
Right so thinke I to serve him prively.
This warne I you, that ye not sodenly
Out of yourself for no wo shuld outraie ;
Beth patient, and therof I you praie. 8520

I have, quod she, sayd thus, and ever shal,
I wol no thing, ne n'ill no thing certain,
But as you list : not greveth me at al
'Though that my doughter and my sone be slain
At your commandement ; that is to fain, 8525
I have not had no part of children twein
But first likenesse and after wo and peine.

Ye ben my lord, doth with your owen thing
Right as you list ; asketh no rede of me ;
For as I left at home al my clothing 8530
Whan I came first to you, right so (quod she)
Left I my will and al my libertee,
And toke your clothing ; wherefore I you prey
Doth your plesance, I wol youre lust obey.

And certes, if I hadde prescience 8535
Your will to know er ye your lust me told,
I wold it do withouten negligence :
But now I wote your lust, and what ye wold,
If your plesance ferme and stable I hold ;

the same:

8535

ight do you els
us to plese.

8540

comparifoun
a this markis fay
e cast adoun
th how she may
ray;

8545

ery contenance,
gret pléſance.

e ſame wiſe
ghte, right ſo he
werſe deviſe)

8550

ful was of beautee :

was ſhe

hevineſſe,

er gan it bleſſe.

8555

, if that he might,

erthe grave,

to fight,

or to ſave.

mighte have :

8560

o thing ne rought,

ly it brought.

ever lenger the more

f that he

herbefore

8565

loved ſhe,

ſom ſubtiltee

L iij

And of malice, or for cruel corage,
 That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But wel he knew that next himself certain 8570
 She loved hire children best in every wise.
 But now of women wold I asken sayn
 If thise assaies mighten not suffice?
 What coud a sturdy husbond more devise
 To preve hire wifhood and hire stedfastnesse, 8575
 And he continuing ever in sturdinesse?

But ther ben folk of swiche condition,
 That whan they han a certain purpos take
 They cannot stint of hir entencion,
 But right as they were bounden to a stake 8580
 They wol not of hir firste purpos flake:
 Right so this markis fully hath purposed
 To tempt his wif as he was first disposed.

He waiteth if by word or contenance
 That she to him was changed of corage; 8585
 But never coud he finden variance;
 She was ay on in herte and in visage;
 And ay the further that she was in age
 The more trewe (if that it were possible)
 She was to him in love, and more penible. 8590

For which it semed thus, that of hem two
 Ther was but o will; for as Walter left
 The same lust was hire plesance also;
 And, God be thanked, all fell for the best.
 She shewed wel for no worldly unrest 8595

A wif, as of hireself, no thing ne sholde
Wille in effect but as hire husbond wolde.

The sclandre of Walter wonder wide spradde,
That of a cruel herte he wikkedly,
For he a poure woman wedded hadde, 8600
Hath murdred both his children prively :
Swich murmur was among hem comunly.
No wonder is, for to the peples ere
Ther came no word but that they murdred were.

For which ther as his peple therbefore 8605
Had loved him wel, the sclandre of his diffame
Made hem that they him hateden therefore :
To ben a mudrour is an hateful name.
But natheles for earnest ne for game
He of his cruel purpos n'olde stente : 8610
To tempt his wif was sette all his entente.

Whan that his doughter twelf yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtil wise
Enformed of his will, sent his message,
Commanding him swiche billes to devise 8615
As to his cruel purpos may suffise,
How that the Pope, as for his peples rest,
Bade him to wed another if him lest.

I say he bade they shulden contrefete
The Popes bulles, making mention 8620

¶. 8614. *his message*] His messenger. See below, ver. 8823.
Message was commonly used for *messenger* by the French poets.
Du Cange, in v. *Messarius*.

That he hath leve his firſte wif to lete,
 As by the Popes diſpenſation
 To ſinten rancour and diſſention
 Betwix his peple and him. Thus ſpake the bull,
 The which they han publiſhed at the full.

The rude peple, as no wonder is,
 Wenden ful wel that it had ben right ſo;
 But whan thiſe tidings came to Griſildis
 I deme that hire herte was ful of wo;
 But ſhe ylike ſad for evermo
 Diſpoſed was, this humble creature,
 The adverſitee of fortune al to endure;

Abiding ever his luſt and his pleaſance
 To whom that ſhe was yeven herte and al,
 As to hire veray worldly ſuffiſance.
 But ſhortly if this ſtorie tell I ſhal,
 This markis writen hath in ſpecial
 A lettre, in which he ſheweth his entente,
 And ſecretly he to Boloigne it ſente

To the Erl of Pavie, which that hadde tho
 Wedded his ſuſter, prayed he ſpecially
 To bringen home agein his children two
 In honourable eſtat al openly;
 But o thing he him prayed utterly,
 That he to no wight, though men wold enquer
 Shulde not tell whos children that they were,

But ſay the maiden ſhuld ywedded be
 Unto the Markis of Saluces anon.

And as this erl was prayed so did he;
 For at day sette he on his way is gon
 Toward Saluces, and lordes many on
 In rich arraie, this maiden for to gide,
 Hire yonge brother riding hire beside.

8650

Arraied was toward hire mariage
 This freshe maiden, ful of gemmes clere,
 Hire brother, which that seven yere was of age,
 Arraied eke ful fresh in his manere :

8655

And thus in gret nobleſſe and with glad chere
 Toward Saluces ſhaping hir journey
 Fro day to day they riden in hir way.

8660

Pars quinta.

Among^{al} his, after this wicked uſage,
 This markis yet his wif to tempten more
 To the utterſte preſe of hire corage,
 Fully to have experience and lore
 If that ſhe were aſtedaſt as before,
 He on a day in open audience
 Ful boiſtrouſly hath ſaid hire this ſentence :

8665

Certes, Grifilde, I had ynough pleaſance
 To han you to my wif for your goodneſſe,
 And for your trouthe and for your obeyſance,
 Not for your linage ne for your richeſſe;
 But now know I in veray ſothſaſtneſſe
 That in gret lordſhip, if I me wel auiſe,
 Ther is gret ſervitude in ſondry wiſe.

8670

I may not don as every ploughman may: 8675
My people me constraineth for to take
Another wif, and crien day by day;
And eke the Pope, rancour for to flake,
Consenteth it, that dare I undertake:
And trewely thus moche I wol you say, 8680
My newe wif is coming by the way.

Be strong of herte, and void anon hire place,
And thilke dower that ye broughten me
Take it agen; I grant it of my grace.
Returneth to your fadres hous, (quod he) 8685
No man may alway have prosperitee.
With even herte I rede you to endure
The stroke of Fortune or of aventure.

And she agen answerd in patience;
My Lord, quod she, I wote and wist alway 8690
How that betwixen your magnificence
And my poverte no wight ne can ne may
Maken comparison; it is no nay:
I ne held me never digne in no manere
To be your wif ne yet your chamberere. 8695

And in this hous ther ye me lady made
(The highs God take I for my witnesse,
And all so wissy he my soule glad)
I never held me lady ne maistresse,
But humble servant to your worthinesse, 8700
And ever shal, while that my lif may dure,
Aboven every wordly creature.

That ye so longe of your benignitee
 Han holden me in honour and nobley,
 Wheras I was not worthy for to be, 8705
 That thanke I God and you, to whom I prey
 Foryelde it you; ther is no more to sey.
 Unto my fader gladly wol I wende,
 And with him dwell unto my lives ende.

Ther I was fostred of a childe ful smal; 8710
 Til I be ded my lif ther wol I lede,
 A widew clene in body, herte, and al:
 For sith I yave to you my maidenhede,
 And am your trewe wif, it is no drede,
 God shilde swiche a lordes wif to take 8715
 Another man to husboud or to make.

And of your newe wif God of his grace
 So graunte you wele and prosperite,
 For I wol gladly yelden hire my place,
 In which that I was blisful wont to be: 8720
 For sith it liketh you, my Lord, (quod she)
 That whilom weren all myn hertes rest,
 That I shal gon, I wol go when you lest.

But ther as ye me profre swiche dowaire
 As I first brought, it is wel in my mind 8725
 It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire,
 The which to me were hard now for to find.
 O goode God! how gentil and how kind
 Ye firmed by your speche and your visage
 The day that maked was oure marriage! 8730

THE CLERKES TALE.

But soth is said, algate I find it trewe,
 For in effect it preved is on me,
 Love is not old as whan that it is newe.
 But certes, Lord, for non adverfitee
 To dien in this cas, it shal not be
 That ever in word or werke I shal repent
 That I you yave min herte in hole entent.

8733

My Lord, ye wote that in my fadres place
 Ye dide me stripe out of my poure wede,
 And richely ye clad me of your grace;
 To you brought I nought elles out of drede
 But faith, and nakednesse, and maidenhede;
 And here agen your clothing I restore,
 And eke your wedding ring, for evermore.

8740

The remenant of your jeweles redy be
 Within your chambre, I dare it fassly fain.
 Naked out of my fadres hous (quod she)
 I came, and naked I mote turne again.
 All your plesance wolde I folwe fain;
 But yet I hope it be not your cntent
 That I smokles out of your paleis went.

87

Ye coude not do so dishonest a thing,
 That thilke wombe, in which your children li:
 Shulde before the peple in my walking
 Be seen al bare; wherfore I you pray
 Let me not like a worme go by the way:
 Remembre you, min owen Lord so dere,
 I was your wif, though I unworthy were.

fore in guerdon of my maidenhede,
 hat I brought and not agen I bere, 8760
 hefauf to yeve me to my mede
 he a smok as I was wont to were,
 herwith may wric the wombe of hire
 as your wif. And here I take my leve
 min owen Lord, lest I you greve. 8765
 smok, quod he, that thou hast on thy bake
 : still, and bere it forth with thee.
 unnethes thilke word he spake,
 it his way for routhe and for pitee.
 he folk hireselven stripeth she, 8770
 hire smok, with foot and hed al bare,
 I hire fadres hous forth is she fare.
 folk hire folwen weping in hir wey,
 rtune ay they cursen as they gon;
 fro weping kept hire eyen drey, 8775
 is time word ne spake she non.
 Jer, that this tiding herd anon,
 : the day and time that Nature
 him to ben a lives creature.
 out of doute this olde poure man 8780
 ver in suspect of hire mariage;
 er he demed, sin it first began,
 chan the lord fulfilled had his corage
 olde thinke it were a disparage
 cflat so lowe for to alight, 8785
 iden hire as sone as ever he might.

me III.

N

Again his daughter hastily goth he,
 (For he by noife of folk knew hire coming)
 And with hire olde cote, as it might be,
 He covereth hire, ful forwefully weping; 875
 But on hire body might he it not bring,
 For rude was the cloth, and more of age
 By daies fele than at hire mariage.

Thus with hire fader for a certain space
 Dwelleth this flour of wifly patience, 879
 That nother by hire wordes ne hire face,
 Beforen the folk, ne eke in hir abfence,
 Ne shewed ſhe that hire was don offence,
 Ne of hire high estat no remembrance
 Ne hadde ſhe as by hire contenance: 880

No wonder is, for in hire gret estat
 Hire goſt was ever in pleine humilitee;
 No tendre mouth, no herte delicat,
 No pompe, no ſemblant of realtee, 885
 But ful of patient benignitee,
 Diſcrete, and prideles, ay honourable,
 And to hire huſbond ever meke and ſtable.

Men ſpeke of Job, and moſt for his humbleſſe,
 As clerkes whan hem liſt can wel endite,
 Namely of men, but as in ſothfaſtneſſe, 889
 Though clerkes preiſen women but a lite,
 Ther can no man in humbleſſe him acquite
 As woman can, ne can be half ſo trewe
 As women ben, but it be faile of newe.

Parasexta.

Fro Boloigne is this Erl of Pavie come, 8815
 & which the same up sprang to more and less;
 And to the peples eres all and some
 Was couth eke that a newe markisfelle
 He with him brought in swiche ponp and richesse,
 That never was ther seen with mannes eye 8820
 So noble array in al West Lombardie.

The markis, which that shope and knew all this,
 Er that this erl was come sent his messaige
 For thilke poure sely Grifildeis,
 And she with humble herte and glad visage, 8825
 Not with no swollen thought in hire corage,
 Came at his heft, and on hire knees hire sette,
 And reverently and wisely she him grette.

Grifilde, (quod he) my will is utterly
 This maiden that shal wedded be to me 8830
 Received be to-morwe as really
 As it possible is in myn hous to be;
 And eke that every wight in his degree
 Have his estat in sitting and service,
 And high plesance, as I can best devise. 8835

I have no woman sufficient certain
 The chambres for to array in ordinance
 After my iust, and thertere wolde I tain
 That thin were al swiche manere governance;
 Thou knowest eke of old all my plesance: 8840
 Though thin array be bad, and evil betey,
 Do thou thy devoir at the late wey.

Not only, Lord, that I am glad (quod she)
 To don your lust, but I desire also
 You for to serue and plese in my degre 8845
 Withcuten fainting, and shal evermo :
 Ne never for no wele ne for no wo
 Ne shal the gost within myn herte stente
 To love you best with all my trewe entente.

And with that word she gan the hous to dight,
 And tables for to sette, and beddes make, 8851
 And peined her to don all that she might,
 Praying the chambereres for Goddes sake
 To hasten hem, and faste swepe and shake ;
 And she, the molle serviceable of all, 8855
 Hath every chambre arraied and his hall.

Abouten undern gan this erl alight
 That with him brought thise noble children twey,
 For which the peple ran to see the fight
 Of I in array, so richely besey ; 8861
 And than at erl arranges hem they sey
 That Wolter was no fool, though that him lest
 To change his wif, for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they demen all,
 Than is Grifilde, and more tendre of age, 88
 And fairer fruit betwene hem shulde fall,
 And more plesant, for hire high linage :
 For brother eke so faire was of visage
 That hem to seen the peple hath caught plesance
 Commending now the markis governance. 1

O stormy people, unfad and ever untrewē,
 And undiserete and changing as a fane,
 Delighting ever in rombel that is newē,
 For like the mone waxen ye and wane :
 Ay ful of clapping, dere ynough a jaue, 8875
 Your dome is fals, your constance evi] preveth,
 A ful gret fool is he that on you leveth !

Thus saiden fadē folk in that citee
 Whan that the peple gased up and down,
 For they were glad right for the noveltee 8880
 To have a newe lady of hir toun.

No more of this make I now mentioun,
 But to Grisilde agen I wol me dresse,
 And telle hire constance and hire besinesse.

Ful besy was Grisilde in every thing 8885
 That to the feste was appertinent;
 Right naught was she abaist of hire clothing,
 Though it were rude, and somdel eke to-rent,
 But with glad chere to the yate is went,
 With other folk, to grete the markisesse, 8890
 And after that doth forth hire besinesse.

With so glad chere his gestes she receiveth,
 And conningly everich in his degree,
 That no defeaute no man apperceiveth,
 But ay they wondren what she mighte be 8895
 That in so poure array was for to see
 And coude swiche honour and reverence,
 And worthily they preisen hire prudence.

In all this mene while she ne stent
 This mide and eke hire brother to commend 8903
 With all hire herte in ful benigne entent,
 So wel that no man coude hire preise amend;
 But at the last whan that thise lordes wend
 To sitten don to mete, he gan to call
 Grisilde, as she was beyn in the hall. 8905

Grisilde, (quod he, as it were in his play)
 How liketh thee my wif and hire beautee?
 Right wel, my Lord, quod she, for in good fay
 A fairer saw I never non than she;
 I pray to God yeve you prosperitee, 8910
 And so I hope that he wol to you send
 Pleaunce ynough unto your lives end.

O thing beseeche I you and warne also,
 That ye ne prikke with no turmenting
 This tendre maiden as ye han do mo, 8915

[L. 8915, *as ye han do mo*] For me. This is one of the most notorious corruptions of orthography that I remember to have observed in Chaucer. All that can be said in excuse of him is, that the old poets of other countries have not been more scrupulous. Quodrio has a long chapter [L. ii. *De f. iv. c. 25. iv.*] upon the liberties taken by the Italian poets, and especially Dante, (the most licentious, as he says, of them all) for the sake of rhyme. As long a chapter might easily be filled with the irregularities which the old French poets committed for the same reason. It should seem that while orthography was so variable as it was in all the living European languages before the invention of printing, the poets thought it generally advisable to sacrifice propriety of spelling to exactness of rhyming; or the former offence there were but few judges, the latter was obvious to the eye of every reader.

or she is fostred in hire norishing
 fore tendrely, and to my supposing
 ne mighte not aduersitee endure
 As coude a poure fostred creature.

And whan this Walter saw hire patience, 8920
 Hire glade chere, and no malice at all,
 And he so often hadde hire don offence,
 And she ay sad and constant as a wall,
 Continuing ever hire innocence over all,
 This sturdy markis gan his herte dresse 8925
 To rewe upon hire wifly stedfastnesse.

This is ynough, Grisilde min, quod he,
 Be now no more agast ne evil apaid,
 I have thy faith and thy benignitee,
 As wel as ever woman was, assaid 8930
 In gret estat and pourellich arraid :
 Now know I, dere wif, thy stedfastnesse;
 And hire in armes toke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder toke of it no kepe;
 She herde not what thing he to hire said; 8935
 She ferde as she had flert out of a slepe,
 Til she out of hire masednesse abraid.
 Grisilde, quod he, by God that for us deid
 Thou art my wif; non other I ne have
 Ne never had, as God my soule save. 8940

This is thy doughter which thou hast supposed
 To be my wif: that other faithfully
 Shal be min heir, as I have ay disposed;

Til on the welkin shone the sterres bright;
 For more solempne in every mannes sight
 This feste was, and greter of costage,
 Than was the revel of hire mariage.

Ful many a yere in high prosperitee
 Liven thise two in concord and in rest,
 And richely his doughter married he
 Unto a lord, on of the worthiest
 Of all Itaille, and than in pees and rest
 His wives fader in his court he kepeth
 Til that the toule out of his body crepeth.

His sone succedeth in his heritage,
 In rest and pees, after his fadres day,
 And fortunat was eke in mariage,
 Al put he not his wif in gret assay:
 'This world is not so strong, it is no nay,
 As it hath ben in olde times yore,
 And herkeneth what this auctour saith therfo

This story is told, not for that wives shuld
 Folwe Grisilde as in humiltee,
 For it were importable tho they wold,
 But for that every wight in his degree
 Shulde be constant in adversitee
 As was Grisilde, therfore Petrark writeth
 This storie, which with high stile he enditeth

For sith a woman was so patient
 Unto a mortal man, wel more we ought
 Receiven all in gree that God us sent.

t skill is he preve that he wrought;
 ne tempteth no man that he bought,
 1 Seint Jame, if ye his pistell rede; 9030
 veth folk al day, it is no drede;
 suffreth us, as for our exercise,
 narpe scourges of adversitee
 n to be bete in sondry wise,
 to know our will, for certes he 9035
 were horne knew all our freeletee,
 r our best is all his governance;
 than live in vertuous suffrance.
 o word, Lordings, herkneth or I go:
 ful hard to finden now adayes 9040
 toun Grisildes thre or two;
 hat they were put to swiche assayes
 ld of hem hath now so bad alayes
 ras, that though the coine be faire at eye
 e rather braft atwo than plie. 9045
 which here, for the Wives love of Bathe,
 if and al hire secte God maintene
 maistrice, and elles were it scathe,
 ith lusty herte freshe and grene
 a song to gladen you I wene, 9050
 t us stint of earnestful matere.
 th my song, that faith in this manere:
 lde is ded, and eke hire patience,
 th at ones buried in Itaille,
 ich I eric in open audience, 9055

Til on the welkin shone the sunne bright, 9000
 For more solampne in every wyght fight
 This fele was, and grette of courage,
 Than was the seed of hirc awyng.

Ful many a yere in high prosperitee,
 Liven thise two in concord and in rest, 9005
 And richly his daughter married he
 Unto a lord, on of the worthiest
 Of all itaile, and than in pees and rest
 His wives fader in his court he keepeth
 Til that the soule out of his body crepeth, 9010

His sone succedeth in his heritage,
 In rest and pees, after his fadres day,
 And fortunat was eke in maringe,
 Al put he not his wif in gret affay:
 This world is not so strong, it is no may, 9015
 As it hath ben in olde times yere,
 And herkneeth what this anstour saith therfore.

This story is said, not for that wive shuld
 Folwe Grifilde as in humiltee,
 For it were importable tho they wold, 9020
 But for that every wight in his degree
 Shulde be constant in adversitee
 As was Grifilde, therfore Petrark writeth
 This storie, which with high stile he enditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient 9025
 Unto a mortal man, wel more we ought
 Receiven all in gree that God us sent.

For gret skill is he preve that he wrought;
 But he ne tempteth no man that he bought,
 As saith Seint Jame, if ye his pistell rede; 9030
 He preveth folk al day, it is no drede;

And suffreth us, as for our exercise,
 With sharpe scourges of adversitee
 Ful often to be bete in sondry wise,
 Not for to know our will, for certes he 9035
 Or we were borne knew all our freeletee,
 And for our best is all his governance;
 Let us than live in vertuouse suffrance.

But o word, Lordings, herkneth or I go:
 It were ful hard to finden now adayes 9040
 In all a toun Grifildes thre or two;
 For if that they were put to swiche assayes
 The gold of hem hath now so bad alayes
 With bras, that though the coine be faire at eye
 It wolde rather braft atwo than plie. 9045

For which here, for the Wives love of Bathe,
 Whos lif and al hire secte God maintene
 In high maistrie, and elles were it scathe,
 I wel with lusty herte freshe and grene
 Say you a song to gladen you I wene, 9050
 And let us stint of ernestful matere.
 Herkneth my song, that saith in this manere:

Grifilde is ded, and eke hire patience,
 And both at ones buried in itaille,
 For which I crië in open audience, 9055

No wedded man so hardy be to assaile
His wives patience, in trust to find
Grifildes, for in certain he shal faile.

O noble wives! ful of high prudence,
Let non humilitee your tonges naile, 966
Ne let no clerk have cause or diligence
To write of you a storie of swiche mervaille
As of Grifildis, patient and kinde, 967
Lest Chichevache you swalwe in hire entraille.

Folwerth Ecco, that holdeth on silence, 968
But ever answereth at the countrevaile;
Beth not bedaffed for your innocence,
But sharply taketh on you the governaile;
Emprenteth wel this lesson in your minde,
For comun profit, sith it may availle. 969

Ye archewives! standeth ay at defence,
Sin ye be strong as is a gret camaille,
Ne suffreth not that men do you offence. 970

¶ 9064. *Lest Chichevache*] This excellent reading is restored upon the authority of the best mss. instead of the common one, *Chibiface*. The allusion is to the subject of an old ballad, which is still preserved in ms. *Harl.* 2251, fol. 270, b. It is a kind of pageant, in which two beasts are introduced called *Byorne* and *Chibevache*. The first is supposed to feed upon obedient husbands, and the other upon patient wives; and the business of the piece consists in representing Byorne as pampered with a superfluous of food, and Chichevache as half starved. — In Stowe's Catalogue of Lydgate's works; at the end of Speght's edit. of Chaucer, there is one entitled "Of two monstrous beasts, *Byorne* and *Chibefache*." It is not improbable that Lydgate translated the ballad now extant from some older French poem to which Chaucer alludes. The name of Chichevache is French; *Ecco, parca*.

And sclendre wives, feble as in bataille,
 Beth egre as is a tigre yond in Inde; 9075
 Ay clappeth as a mill I you counsaile.

Ne drede hem not, doth hem no reverence,
 For though thin husbond armed be in maille
 The arwes of thy crabbed eloquence
 Shal perce his brest and eke his aventaille: 9080
 In jalousie I rede eke thou him binde,
 And thou shalt make him couche as doth a quaille.

If thou be faire, ther folk ben in prefence
 Shew thou thy visage and thin aparaille;
 If thou be soule be free of thy dispence; 9085
 To get thee frendes ay do thy travaille:
 Be ay of chere as light as lefe on linde,
 And let him care, and wepe, and wringe, and waille.

¶ 9080. *aventaille*] The forepart of the armour, *sk.* He deduces it from *avant*. But *ventaille* was the common name for that aperture in a close helmet through which the wearer was to breathe, [*Nicot*. in v.] so that perhaps *aventaille* meant originally an helmet with such an aperture; *un heaume à ventaille*.

¶ 9088. *and wringe, and waille*] Beside the mss. C. 1. 1. 2. 1, 2, and others, we have the authority of both Caxton's editt. for concluding The Clerkes Tale in this manner. I say nothing of the two editt. by Pynson, as they are mere copies of Caxton's second: but I must not conceal a circumstance which seems to contradict the supposition that The Marchant's Prologue followed immediately. In those same mss. the following stanza is interposed;

This worthy Clerk, whan ended was his Tale,
 Gave helle faide and swore by cockes bones,
 Me were lever than a barrel of ale
 My wif at home had herd this legend ones:
 This is a gentil Tale for the nones,
 As to my purpos, wille ye my wille;
 But trow that wol not be let it be stille.

Volume III.

N

THE MARCHANTES PROLOGUE

WEPING and wailing, care, and other sorwe,
 I have ynough on even and on morwe,
 Quod the Marchant, and so have other mo
 That wedded ben ; I trowe that it be so,
 For wel I wot it fareth so by me.
 I have a wif the werste that may be,
 For though the fend to hire ycoupled were
 She wolde him overmatche I dare wel swere.
 What shulde I you reherse in special
 I hire high malice ? she is a shrew at al.

Whatever may be thought of the genuineness of the
 they can at best, in my opinion, be considered as a fr
 of an unfinished prologue which Chaucer might once h
 tended to place at the end of The Clerkes Tale. Whe
 terminated to connect that Tale with The Marchant's
 ther manner, he may be supposed, notwithstanding, t
 left this stanza for the present uncanceled in his ms.
 made use of the thought, and some of the lines, in the F
 which connects The Monkes Tale with Melibee, ver. 1
 13900---The two additional stanzas, which were first
 in ed. *Urry* from ms. *F.* [*H.* 1, in *Urry's* list.] and whi
 to introduce The Frankeleyn's Tale next to The Cler
 evidently, I think, spurious. They are not found, as
 lect, in any ms. except that cited by Mr. *Urry*, and n

Ther is a long and a large difference
 Betwix Grisildes grete patience 9100
 And of my wife the passing crueltee.
 Were I unbounden, all so mote I the,
 I wolde never est comen in the snare.
 We wedded men live in forwe and care :
 Assay it who so wol, and he shal finde 9105
 That I say soth, by Seint Thomas of Inde,
 As for the more part, I say not alle;
 God shilde that it shulde so befall.

A, good Sire Hoste, I have ywedded be
 Thise monethes two, and more not parde ; 9110
 And yet I trowe that he that all his lif
 Wifles hath ben, though that men wolde him rise
 Into the herte, ne coude in no manere
 Tellen so much forwe as I you here
 Coud tellen of my wives cursednesse. 9115

Now, quod our Hoste, Marchant, so God you bleffe,
 Sin ye so mochel knowen of that art
 Ful hertely I pray you tell us part.

Gladly, quod he, but of min owen fore,
 For sory herte I tellen may no more. 9120

THE MARCHANTES TALE.

WHILOM ther was dwelling in Lumbardie
 A worthy knight, that born was at Pavie,

The Marchantes Tale] Old January marrieth young May, and
 for his unequal match receiveth a foul reward. *Urry.*

In which he lived in gret gret chere,
 And sixty yere a wifless man yere,
 And folwed ay his bodily deite,
 On women ther was his appetit,
 As don thise foolen that ben fowleren,
 And whan that he was passed sixty yere,
 Were it for holiness or for dotage,
 I cannot saie, but swiche a gret torage,
 Hadde this knight to ben a wedded man,
 That day and night he doth all that he can,
 To espie wher that he might wedded be,
 Praying our lord to granten him that he
 Mighte ones knowen of that blisful lif
 That is betwix an husband and his wif,
 And for to live under that holy bond
 With which God firste man and woman bond.
 Non other lif (said he) is worth a bene;
 For wedlok is so cly and so elene
 That in this world it is a paradise.
 Thus saith this olde knight that was so wif.
 And certainly, as sech as God is king,
 To take a wif it is a glorious thing,
 And namely whan a man is old and hore,
 Than is a wif the fruit of his trefore;
 Than shuld he take a yong wif and a faire,
 On which he might engoodren him an heire,
 And lede his lif in joye and in solas,
 Wheras thise bachelers singen alas!

913

914

915

916

When that they childe be aduised
 In love, which is his childish vanitie,
 And trewely to be wot to be so
 That bachelers have often poine and wo :
 On brotel ground they hilde, and brotelnesse 9155
 They finden when they wench sikernesse :
 They live but as a bird or as a beste,
 In libertee and under non areste,

Then as a wedded man in his estat 9160
 Liveth a lif blisful and ordinat,
 Under the yoke of marriage ybound ;
 Wel may his herte in joys and blisse abound :
 For who can be so buxom as a wif ?
 Who is so trewe and eke so ententif 9165
 To kepe him, like and hole, as is his make ?
 For wele or wo she n'ill him not forsake ;
 She n'is not wery him to love and serve
 Though that he lie bedrede til that he sterve.
 And yet som clerkes sain it is not so, 9170
 Of which he Theophrast is on of tho.
 What force though Theophrast list for to lie ?
 Ne take no wif, quod he, for husbondrie,

* 9172. *Ne take no wif*] What follows, to ver. 9180 incl.
 taken from the *Liber aureolus Theophrasti de nuptiis*, as quod
 by Hieronymus *contra Jovinianum*, and from thence by J.
 of Salisbury, *Polycrat.* l. viii. c. xi. ; "Quod si propter dis-
 "sationem domus, et languoris solatia, et fugam solitud-
 "ducuntur uxores, multo melius dispensat servus fidelis,
 "Assidere autem egrotanti magis possunt amici et ve-

As for to spare in household thy diligence;
 A trewe servant doth more diligente;
 Thy good to kepe than doth this wretched wif;
 For she wol chaunge half part of hire lif;
 And if that thou be like, to God the fere;
 Thy veray frendes or a trewe here;
 Wol kepe thee bet than she, that waiteth ay
 After thy good, and hath don many a day.

This sentence, and an hundred thinges more,
 Writeth this man, ther God his honer cure.
 But take no kepe of al swiche vanitee;
 Desieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.

"beneficis obligati quam illa, quæ nobis imputet lacrymas
 "suas," &c.

ψ. 9180. *many a day*] After this verse, in the common edit.
 are these two;

And if thou take to thee a wif untrew
 Full oftentimes it shall thee forew.

In mss. *A. C.* and *B. α.* they stand thus—

And if thou take a wif be wel yow
 Of on peril thing which I declare so dow.

In mss. *C. 1, H. A. D.* thus—

And if thou take a wif of heye lynage
 She shal be hanteyn and of gret collage.

In mss. *B. β.* thus—

And if thou take a wif in this age olde
 Ful lightly mayst thou be a cokewold.

In mss. *A. β. 1, 2, E. H. B. θ. N. c.* and both *Caxton's* edit. they
 are entirely omitted, and so I believe they should be. If any
 one of those couplets should be allowed to be from the hand
 of Chaucer, it can only be considered as the opening of a new
 argument, which the Author for some reason or other imme-
 diately abandoned, and consequently would have cancelled if
 he had lived to publish his Work.

Goddess yefte veraily; 9185
 maner yeftes hardely,
 rentes, pasture, or commune,
 all ben yeftes of Fortune,
 as a shadow on the wall :
 hou not if plainly speke I shal; 9190
 last and in thin hous endure
 than thee list paraventure.
 is a ful gret sacrament;
 that hath no wif I hold him shent;
 helples and all desolat : 9195
 folk in seculer estat)
 eth why, I say not this for nought,
 an is for mannes helpe ywrought :
 God, whan he had Adam makod,
 im al alone belly naked, 9200
 grete goodnesse saide than,
 make an helpe unto this man
 nself, and than he made him Eve.
 y ye see, and hereby may ye preve,
 is mannes helpe and his comfort, 9205
 s terrestre, and his disport :
 and so vertuous is she,
 en nedes live in unitee :
 y ben, and o flesch, as I gesse,
 on herte in wele and in distresse. 9210
 a! Seinte Marie, *benedicite* !
 it a man have any adversite

The blisse the which that is betwixen
Ther may no tonge telle or herte thin
If he be poure she helpeth him to swin
She kepeth his good, and wasteth new
All that hire husband doth hire liketh
She saith not ones Nay when he saith
Do this, saith he; Al redy, Sire, saith

O blisful ordre, o wediok precious!
Thou art so mery and eke so vertuous
And so commended and approved eke
That every man that holt him worth
Upon his bare knees cught all his lif
Thanken his God that him hath sent a
Or elles pray to God him for to send
A wif to last unto his lives end:
For than his lif is set in sikernesse,
He may not be deceived, as I gesse,
So that he werche after his wives rede
Than may he boldly beren up his hede
They ben so trewe, and therwithal so
For which, if thou wilt werchen as thou
Do alway so as women wol thee rede.

Lo how that Jacob, as thise clerkes
By good conseil of his mother Rebeck
Bounde the kiddes skin about his nekk

†. 9236. *Lo how that Jacob*] The same inst.
in Melibee.

1111. MARDUCHES TALE. 333

his fadres beuise he won.
hath the storie che tell can, 9240

whil the Goddes peple kept,
in Holofernes while he slept.
wyl by good conseil how she
husbond Nabal, whan that he
is slain. And loke, Hester also 9245

ncil delivered out of wo
of God, and made him Mardochee
enhansed for to be.

no thing is gree superlatif
cnck) above an humble wif. 9250

gives tonge, as Caton hit ;
mmand and thou shalt suffren it,
e wol obey of curtesie.

keeper of thin husbondrie :
he like man bewaile and wepe 9255

x is no wif the hous to kepe.
ce, if wisely thou wilt werche,
hy wif as Crist loveth his cherche :

st thyself love thou thy wif.
teth his flesh, but in his lif 9260

As faith Senek] In marg. C. 1; "Sicut nihil est
nigra conjuge, ita nihil est crudelius infecta mu-
cca.

as Caton hit] i. e. biddeth. See the n. on ver. 187.

erred to be quoted in marg. C. 1;

linguam, si frugi est, ferre memento.

Dist. 25.

If thou lovest thyself] The allusion is to Ephes. 5.
loveth his wife loveth himself. The mss. read—*If*
thyself thou lovest thy wif—which I think is cer-

THE MERCHANTES TALE.

He fostreth it, and therefore bid I thee
 Cherish thy wif, or thou shalt never the.
 Husband and wif, what so men jape or play,
 Of worldly folk holden the liker way:
 They ben so knit ther may non harm betide, 916;
 And namely upon the wives side.

For which this January, of whom I told,
 Considered hath within his dayes old
 The lusty wif, the vertuous quite, 917
 That is in mariage honey-swete,

And for his frendes on a day he sent
 To tellen hem th' effect of his entent.

With face sad his tale he hath hem told:
 He sayde, frendes, I am hore and old, 927
 And almost (God wot) on my pirres brinke,

Upon my soule somewhat most I thinke.
 I have my body foolishly dispended,
 Blessed be God that it shal ben amended I
 For I wol ben certain a wedded man,

And that anon in all the hast I can,
 Unto som maiden, faire and tendre of age,
 I pray you shapeth for my mariage

All sodenly, for I wol not abide;
 And I wol fonde to espien on my side
 To whom I may be wedded hastily.

But for as moche as ye ben more than I
 tainly wrong. I have printed, from conjecture only
 thy wif. But upon reconsidering the passage I thir
 brought still nearer to the apostle's doctrine by we
 lovest thyself if thou lovest thy wif.

Ye shullen rather swiche a thing espien
Than I, and wher me beste were to allien.

But o thing warn I you, my frendes dere,
I wol non old wif han in no manere ; 9290

She shal not passen twenty yere certain :
Old fish and yonge flesh wold I have fain.

Bet is (quod he) a pike than a pikerel,
And bet than old beef is the tendre veel.

I wol no woman thirty yere of age ; 9295
It is but benestraw and gret forage.

And eke thise olde widewes (God it wote)
They conneu so moch craft on Waides bote,
So mochel broken harm whan that hem left,
That with hem shuld I never live in rest. 9300

For sondry scoles maken subtil clerkes ;
Woman of many scoles half a clerk is.

But certainly a yong thing men may gie,
Right as men may warm wax with handes plie ;

¶ 9298. *Waides bote*] Upon this Mr. Speght remarks as follows ; “ Concerning *Waide* and his *bote*, called Gungelot, as “ also his straunge exploits in the same, because the matter is “ long and fabulous I passe it over.”——*Quantum non tam negligenter ?* Mr. Speght probably did not foresee that posterity would be as much obliged to him for a little of this fabulous matter concerning *Waide* and his *bote* as for the gravest of his annotations. The story of *Waide* is mentioned again by our Author in his *Troilus*, iii. 615 ;

He sauge, the playde, he tolde a tale of *Waide*.

It is there put proverbially for any romantick history ; but the allusion in the present passage to *Waides bote* can hardly be explained without a more particular knowledge of his adventures than we are now likely ever to attain.

Wherefore I say you plainly in a clause
 I wol non old wif haeright for charyte.

For if so were I hadde swiche manerly
 That I in hire ne coude haue no plesaunce;
 Than shuld I lose my lif in yowre hande;
 And so freight to the devil whan I falle.
 Ne children shuld I woe upon hire gooth;
 Yet were me lever houndes had me own
 Than that min heritage shuld falle
 In strange hondes; and this I tell you all.
 I dote not, I wot the cause why

Men shalden wedde; and furthermore wot I
 Ther speketh many a man of mariage
 That wot no more of it than wot my page
 For which causes a man shuld take a wif.

If he ne may not liven chaff his lif,
 Take him a wif with gret devotion,
 Because of leful procreation
 Of children, to the honour of God above,
 And not only for paramour or love,
 And for they shulden lecherie eschue,
 And yeld hir dette whan that it is due,
 Or for that eche of hem shuld helpen other
 In meschefe, as a suster shal the brother,
 And live in chastitee ful holily.

But, Sire, (by your leve) that am not I,
 For, God be thanked, I dare make avaunt
 I fele my limmes stark and sufficient

at a man belongeth to :
 en best what I may do.
 hoor I fare as doth a tre 9335
 her the fruit ywoxen be ;
 re n'is neither drie ne ded :
 wher hoor but on my hed :
 id all my limmes ben as grene
 igh the yere is for to sene. 9340
 ye han herd all min entent
 my will ye wolde assent.
 en diversely him told
 many ensamples old ;
 it, fom praised it certain : 9345
 e, shortly for to fain,
 alleth altercation
 endes in disputifon)
 rif betwix his brethren two,
 at on was cleped Placebo, 9350
 ily called was that other.
 yd, O January ! brother,
 e han ye, my lord so dere,
 ke of any that is here,
 ben so ful of sapience 9355
 : liketh for your high prudence

putifon'] Disputation ; so ver. 11202, 15244. See

bn. int. fol. 15. b. ;

disputifon they were.

151, b.

!Z.

O

To weiven fro the word of Salomon;
 This word sayd he unto us everich on,
 Werke alle thing by conseil, thus sayd he,
 And than ne shalt thou not repenten thee. 9360
 But though that Salomon spake swiche a word,
 Min owen dere brother and my lord,
 So wisly God my soule bringe at rest,
 I hold your owen conseil is the best.

For, brother min, take of me this motif, 9365
 I have now ben a court-man all my life,
 And God it wot, though I unworthy be,
 I have stonden in ful gret degree.
 Abouten lordes of ful high estat,
 Yet had I never with non of hem debat; 9370
 I never hem contraried trewely.
 I wot wel that my lord can more than I;
 What that he saith I holde it firme and stable;
 I say the same, or elles thing semblable.
 A ful gret fool is any conseilour, 9375
 That serveth any lord of high honour,
 That dare presume, or ones thinken it,
 That his conseil shuld passe his lordes wit:
 Nay, lordes be no fooles by my fay.
 Ye han yourselven shewed here to-day 9380
 So high sentence, so holily, and wel,
 That I consent, and confirme every del
 Your wordes all, and your opinioun.
 By God ther n'is no man in all this toun,

He, coud bet han yfayd : 9383
 : high of this conseil wel appaid :
 rely it is an high corage
 an that stopen is in age
 : young wif : by my fader kin
 te hongeth on a joly pin. 9390
 now in this matere right as you left,
 y I hold it for the best :
 as, that ay stille sat and herd ;
 this wife he to Placebo answerd :
 other min, be patient I pray, 9395
 un said, and herkneht what I say :
 , among his other wordes wise,
 at a man ought him right wel avise
 n he yeveth his lond or his catel :
 I ought avisen me right wel 9400
 n I yeve my good away fro me,
 e I ought avisen me, parde,
 n I yeve my body ; for alway
 you wel it is no childes play
 a wif without avisement. 9405
 ft cnqueren (this is min assent)
 she be wise and sobre or dronkelewe,
 l, or elles other waies a shrew,
 ter, or a wastour of thy good,
 or poure, or elles a man is wood : 9410
 . a childer] So ms. A. See the note on ver. 2019 :
 . a man is wood] In ms. A. mannifoured ; in C. 14
 wood.

Al be it so that no man finden shal
Non in this world that trottest hol in al,
Ne man ne beste, swiche as men can devise,
But natheles it ought ynough suffice
With any wif, if so were that she had
Mo goode thewes than hire vices bad:
And all this axeth leifer to enquire;
For God it wot I have wept many a tere
Ful prively sin that I had a wif.
Praise who so wol a wedded mannes lif,
Certain I find in it but cost and care,
And observances of alle blisses here;
And yet, God wor, my neighbours aboute,
And namely of women many a route,
Sain that I have the moste stedfast wif,
And eke the mekest on, that bereth hif:
But I wot best wher wringeth me my thro.
Ye may for me right as you liketh do.
Aviseþ you, ye ben a man of age,
How that ye entren into mariage,
And namely with a yong wif and a faire.
By him that made water, fire, erthe, and aire,
The yongest man that is in all this route
Is besy ynow to bringen it aboute
To han his wif alone, trusteth me:
Ye shul not plesen hire fully yeres thre,
This is to sain, to doñ hire ful plesance:
A wif axeth ful many an observance.

ne not evil appaid.
 uary, and hast thou faide? 9440
 id straw for thy proverbes;
 r ful of herbes
 fer men than thou,
 ssented here right now
 cebo, what saye ye? 9445
 l man, quod he,
 noine fikerly.
 l they risen sodenly,
 lly that he sholde
 m list and wher he wolde. 9450
 l curious besineffe
 in the soule enpresse
 is mariage:
 nd many a faire visage
 n his herte night by night. 9455
 irroure polished bright,
 me market place,
 any a figure pace
 in the same wise
 h his thought devise 9460
 hat dwelten him beside;
 that he might abide;
 beautee in hire face,
 the peples grace,
 nd hire benignitee, 9465
 ie greteft vois hath sue:

And som were riche and hadden a had name;
 But natheles, betwix ernest and game,
 He at the last appointed him an am,
 And let all other from his herte gon, 9470
 And chees hire, of his owen an churice,
 For love is blind all day and may not see;
 And whan that he was in his bed yfrought
 He purtreied in his herte and in his thought
 Hire freshe beautee and hire eye trimme, 9475
 Hire middel full, hire armes long and fildive,
 Hire wise governaunce, hire gentillesse,
 Hire womanly bering, and hire fadnesse.

And whan that he on hire was candelcanded
 Him thought his chois it might not ben amended;
 For whan that he himself coneluded had, 9481
 Him thought eke other mannes wit so bad
 That impossible it were to replie
 Again his chois: this was his fantasie.

His frendes sent he to, at his instance, 9485
 And praied hem to don him that plesance
 That hastily they wolden to him come;
 He wolde abregge hir labour all and some:
 Neded no more to hem to go ne ride,
 He was appointed ther he wolde abide. 9490

Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone,
 And alderfirst he bade hem all a bone,
 That non of hem non argumentes make
 Again the purpos that he hath ytake;

Which purpos was plesant to God (said he) 9495

And veray ground of his prosperitee. . .

. He said ther was a maiden in the town

Which that of beautee hadde gret renown,

Al werp it so she were of final degree;

Sufficeth him hire youth and hire beautee; 9500

Which maid (he said) he wold han to his wif,

To lede in eke and holinesse his life; . . .

And thanked God that he might han hire all,

That no wight with his blisse parten shal;

And praied hem to labour in this ned, 9505

And shapen that he faille not to spede: . .

For than, he sayd; his spirit was at eke;

Than is (quod he) nothing may me displese,

Save o thing pricketh in my conscience,

The which I wol reherse in your presence. 9510

I have (quod he) herd said ful yore ago

Ther may no man han parfitte blisses two,

This is to say, in erthe and eke in heven;

For though he kepe him fro the sinnes seven,

And eke fro every branch of thilke tree, 9515

Yet is ther so parfitte felicitye,

And so gret eke and lust, in mariage,

That ever I am agast, now in min age,

That I shal leden now so mery a lif,

So delicat, withouten wo or strif, 9520

That I shal han min heven in erthe here;

For sin that veray heven is bought so dere,

the allege,
or be non obſtacle
d of his his miracle,
may it for you were
ur rights of holy cher
woud d mannes lif,
there is no wone ſtrif;
woud but if he fine
is grace him to repen
than a ſingle man:
the beſt rede that
but haveth in mer
may be your Purge
sme and God
die up unto heve
an arrow of a bo
after ye find ke
to get richin
or more than

That you shal let of your salvation,
 So that ye use, as skill is and reson,
 The lusten of your wif attemperly,
 And that ye please hire but to amercounly,
 And that ye hope you eke from othe flanes. 9555
 My Tale is don, for my wit is but thinnid.
 Beth not agast hire, my brother dere,
 But let us waden out of this mattede.
 The Wif of Beke, if ye han understood,
 Of mariage, which ye now han in bond, 9560
 Declared hath ful wel in liel space.
 Forsoþ now wel, God have you in his grace!

And with this word this Jastine and his brother
 Han take hire leve, and eche of hem of othe.
 And whan they saw that it must needs be, 9565
 They wroghten so by sleighte and wise trete
 That she this maiden, which that Maia hight,
 As hastily as ever that she might,
 Shal wedded be unto this January.
 I trow it were to longe you to tary. 9570
 If I you told of every script and bond
 By which that she was feoffed in his bond,
 Or for to rekken of hire rich array.
 But, finally, ycomen is the day
 That to the chirche bothe ben they went. 9575
 For to receive the holy sacrament,
 Forth cometh the preest, with stole about his nekke,
 And bade hire be like Sara and Rebekke

In wisdom and in trouthe of mariage;
 And sayd his orisons, as is usage,
 And crouched hem; and bade God shuld hem blesse,
 And made all liker ynow with holinesse.
 Thus hen they wedded with solempnitee;
 And at the felis-feteth he and she,
 With other worthy folk, upon the deis.
 Al ful of joye and blisse is the paleis;
 And ful of instruments; and of vitaille.
 The moste deintions of all itaille.
 Beforn hem stood swiche instruments of sooth
 That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion,
 Ne maden never swiche a melodias
 At every cours in came loude ministracie,
 That never Joab tromped for to here,
 Ne he Theodomas yet half so clere
 At Thebes whan the citee was in doute.
 Bacchus the win hem skinketh all aboute
 And Venus laugheth upon every wight.
 (For January was become hire knight,
 And wolde both assaien his corage
 In libertee and eke in mariage)

*. 9594. *Ne he Theodomas*] This person
 as a famous trumpeter in the *H. of F.* iil. i
 authority I really do not know. I should
 thor met with him and the anecdote all
 mantick history of Thebes. — *He* is presi
 emphatically, according to the Saxon M
 9242, *him* Holofernes; ver. 9247, *him* M
 ver. 9608;
 Of hire Philologie and *him* Mercurie

And with hire firebrond in hire hond aboute
 Danceth before the bride and all the route.
 And certainly I dare right wel say this,
 Ymeneus, that god of Wedding is,
 Saw never his lif so mery a wedded man. 9605

Hold thou thy pees, thou poet Marcian,
 That writest us that ilke wedding mery
 Of hire Philologic and him Mercurie,
 And of the songes that the Muses songe;
 To smal is both thy pen and eke thy tonge 9610
 For to descriven of this mariage.

Whan tendre Youth hath wedded stouping Age
 Ther is swiche mirth that it may not be writen:
 Affaieth it yourself, than may ye witen
 If that I lie or non in this matere. 9615

Maius, that sit with so benigne a chere,
 Hire to behold it femed Faerie.
 Quene Hester looked never with swiche an eye
 On Assuere, so meke a look hath she.
 I may you not devise all hire beautee; 9620
 But this moch of hire beautee tell I may,
 That she was, like the brighte morwe of May,
 Fulfilled of all beautee and plesance.

This January is ravished in a trance
 At every time he loketh in hire face; 9625
 But in his herte he gan hire to manace
 That he that night in armes wold hire streine
 Harder than ever Paris did Heleine.

Now wille God that it were women night
And that the night wold lasten ever more!
I wold that all this people were age!
And I pray, be with all his labour,
As he hath mighten, saving his honour,
To make hem fro the more in labour wike.

The time came that Peter was to rule,
And after that men doun and doun her sat
And spoke all about the hows they cast.
And for of joye and blisse is every man,
All but a squier that highte Darrin,
Which carl before the knyght sat many a
He was so ravysht on his Lady May,
That for the veray paine he was the wood
Almost he swelt, and swooned ther he stode

And to his bed he went him haitily :
 No more of him as at this time speke I,
 but ther I let him wepe ynow and plaine 9655
 Til freshe May wol rewen on his peine.

O perilous fire that in the bedstraw bredeth !
 O famuler so that his service bedeth !
 O servant traitour, false of holy hewe,
 Like to the nedder in bosom flie untrewē, 9660
 God thelde us alle from your acquaintance !
 O January ! drunken in plesance
 Of mariage, see how thy Damian,
 Thin owen squier and thy boren man,
 Entendeth for to do thee vilanie : 9665
 God grante thee thin homly so to espie,
 For in this world n'is werse pestilence
 Than homly so all day in thy presence.

Parformed hath the sonne his arke diurne,
 No longer may the body of him sojournē 9670
 On the orisont, as in that latitude ;
 Night, with his mantel that is derke and rude,
 Gan oversprede the hemisperie aboute,
 For which departed is this lusty route

✧. 9659. *his service bedeth*] Proffereth; so this word is explained in another passage, ver. 16533;

Lo how this thefe conde *his service bede* !
 Ful soth it is that *fauous proffered service*
 Stinketh, as witnessen thise olde wise.

See also ver. 8236.

✧. 9659. *false-falsly hewe*] I have added *of* from conjecture
 See below, ver. 12355, under hewe *of* holinesse.

Volume III.

P

987½

to rest.

988

Vernage,

rage;

fine,

n Constantine

988½

toitu;

ing eschue :

as sayd he :

as it may be,

Ital. "Credo sic dictum (say)
agro, *Peronensi*, in quo opo-
rescit." But the *Vernage* (what-
son of its name) was probably a
labouring continent. *Freigart*, "
ie il leur venoit tresbonnes *Mal-*
ornaches dont ils estoient large.
Our Author in another place, ver-
ie wines of Malvesie and *Vernage*
the eastern coast of the Morea, near
Aurus Limera, within a small distance

ine] Dan (a corruption of *Domini*)
ally given to monks, as *Dom* and *Dan*
palm. See below ver. 13935;

you my Lord Dan John,
elles Dan Albon!

ording to Fabric. *Bibl. Med.* *M. 1. 1. p.*
year 1080. His works, including the trea-
text, were printed at Basil 1536, fol.

And thus is misfoul
 And he wol. do wife.
 And vers. drawed upon;
 And as still as King
 With the priest yblest
 And every wight him dressed,
 And arms take
 And his make
 And hire ful oft;
 And berd unsoft,
 And sharp is bere,
 And in his manere)
 And tendre face,
 And more trespice
 And grety offend,
 And down descende
 And this, (quod he)
 And whatsoever he be,
 And wet and hastily:
 And partly.
 And that we play;
 And be we tway;

n] This line has also been left out
 is in all the best mss. and in edit.
 the following line —
 I be don —
 169 r, and the four lines have been
 adding *one* at the end of ver. 9689;
 curteis wife song,

And blessed be the yoke that we ben inne,
 For in our actes may ther be no sinne.
 A man may do no sinne with his wif,
 Ne hurt himselfen with his owen knif,
 For we have leue to play us by the lawe.

Thus laboureth he til that the day gan daw
 And than he taketh a sop in fine clarre,
 And upright in his bed than sitteth he,
 And after that he sang ful loud and clere,
 And kist his wif, and maketh wanton chere.
 He was al coltish, ful of ragerie,
 And ful of jergon as a flecked pie.
 The slacke skin about his necke shaketh
 While that he sang, so chanteth he and craket
 But God wot what that May thought in hire
 Whan she him saw up sitting in his sherte
 In his night cap, and with his necke lene:
 She praiseth not his playing worth a bene.
 Than sayd he thus; My reste wol I take,
 Now day is come, I may no lenger wake;
 And doun he layd his hed and slept til prime.
 And afterward, whan that he saw his time,
 Up riseth January, but freshe May
 Held hire in chambre til the fourthe day,
 As usage is of wives for the beste;
 For every labour sountime moſte han reste,

➤ 9714. *Ne hurt himselfen*] In *The Persones Tale* a contrary doctrine; "God wote a man may see him
 "his owen knif, and make himselfe drunken of his owen

Or elles longe may he be endure;
This is to say, no liht creature,
But of fise, be bryd; or best, or man.
Now wol I speke of wyf Damian,
That langweth for love, as ye shal here,
Therefore I speke to him in this manere.

9744

I say, O fely Damian, what
Answer to this demand as in this cas;
How shalt thou to thy lady frethe May,
Tellen thy wo? she wil alway say nay;
ke if thou speke she wol thy wo bewraun;
od be thin help! I can no better sein.
This like Damian is: From five
brenneth that he dirst for dours.

9745

r which he put his lif in aventure,
lenger might he in this wile endure,
prively a peaner gan he worwe;
in a lettre wrote he all his sorwe,
anere of a complaint or a lay,
his faire frethe Lady May,
in a purse of silk heng on his sherte,
wh it put, and layd it at his herte.

9750

ne mone that at none was thilke day
January hath wedded frethe May
of Taure was into Cancer gliden,
hath Maius in hire chambre abiden,

9755

9760

1. In ten of Taure] The greatest number of mss. read
100, or 10. But the time given (four days complete,
) is not sufficient for the moon to pass from the 2d

As custome is unto thise nobles alle,
 A bride shal not eten in the halle
 Til dayes four, or three dayes at the leste,
 Ypassed ben, than let hire go to feste.
 The fourthe day complete from none to none;
 Whan that the highe messe was ydone,
 In halle sat this January and May
 As fresh as is the bryghte somers day;
 And so befel how that this goode man
 Remembred him upon this Damian,
 And sayde, Seinte Marie, how may it be
 That Damian entendeth not to me?
 Is he ay sike? or how may this betide?
 His squiers, which that stoden ther beside,
 Excused him because of his siknesse,
 Which letted him to don his besinesse;
 Nou other cause mighte make him tary.

That me forthinketh, quod this January;
 He is a gentil squier by my trouthe,
 If that he died it were gret harme and routhe;
 He is as wise, discret, and as secree,
 As any man I wote of his degree,
 And therto manly and eke servisable,
 And for to ben a thrifty man right able.

degree of Taurus into Cancer. The mean daily motion
 moon being = 13. 10. 35. her motion in 4 days is = 10. 2.
 or not quite 53 degrees; so that supposing her to set ou
 the 2d of Taurus, she would not, in that time, be adv
 beyond the 25th degree of Gemini. If she set out fr
 20th degree of Taurus (as I have corrected the text) she
 properly enough be said, in four days, to be gliden into

But after mete, as sone as ever I may,
 I wol myselfe visite him, and eke May,
 To don him all the comfort that I can.
 And for that word him blessed every man, 9792
 That of his bountee and his gentilleffe
 He wolde so comforten in siknesse
 His squier, for it was a gentil dede.

Dame, quod this January, take good hede
 At after mete ye with your women alle, 9795
 (Whan that ye ben in chambre out of this halle)
 That all ye gon to see this Damian;
 Doth him disport, he is a gentil man,
 And telleth him that I wol him visite,
 Have I no thing but rested me a lite: 9800
 And spede you faste, for I wol abide
 Til that ye slepen faste by my side.
 And with that word he gan unto him calle
 A squier that was marshal of his halle,
 And told him certain thinges that he wolde. 9805

This freshe May hath streight hire way yholde,
 With all hire women. unto Damian:
 Down by his beddes side sit she than,
 Conforting him as goodly as she may.

This Damian, whan that his time he say, 9810
 In secree wise his purse and eke his bill,
 In which that he ywritten had his will,
 Hath put into hire hond withouten more,
 Save that he liked wonder depe and fere,

THE MERCHANTS TAKE.

And when the granteth him hire very good;
 He taketh thought but only day and place
 To take the night unto his lustful fancy;
 As he might as he wol devise.
 And when the law hire time upon a day
 He taketh the Damian goth this May,
 And setteth down the threft
 And taketh care, nede it if him left;
 And taketh care to be the hond, and hard him twit,
 And taketh care to wight of it wift, 9875
 And taketh care for all hol; and forth he went
 In January when he for hire sent.

Up with Damian the nexte morwe,
 All pulled was his likene and his forwe.
 He kembeth him, he proineth him and piketh. 9880
 He doth all that his lady lust and liketh;
 And eke to January he goth as lowe
 As ever did a dogge for the howe.
 He is so pleasant unto every man,
 (For craft is all, who so that don it can) 9890
 That every wight is fain to speke him good;
 And fully in his ladies grace he flood.

Thus let I Damian about his nede,
 And in my Tale forth I wol procede.

Som clerkes holden that felicitie 9895
 Stant in delit, and therefore certain he,

9888. *a dogge for the howe*] A dog used in shooting. See
Brant, ver. 6951.

Of consolation, that in swich distress
 The heven shed at allas time of payne;
 As for to put a bill of Venus on his brest
 (For alle thing hallowe is, and synnys clerkis).
 If any woman desyre to get his love,
 I cannot say, but praye God, praye
 That knoweth that thou art his creature,
 He deeme of all, for I wol hold thyposall. 9845
 But for to bidde, how that this gentil May
 Hath taken swich impression, that day
 Of piteous sturshull dampnys, it is not hard to see
 That she hire herte she is drempt and drewe
 The remembrance for to don his eschall. 9855
 Certain (thought she) whom shal this thing displese
 I rekke not, for here I him assaye,
 To love him best of any creature,
 Though he no more hadde than his shewe.

Lo, pitee renneth fone in gentil herte: 9860
 Here may ye seen how excellent franchise
 In women is, when they hem shewe a wife;
 Som tyrant is, as ther been many on,
 That hath an herte as hard as any ston,
 Which wold ha lette him sterven in the place 9865
 Wel rather than ha granted him hire grace,
 And hem rejoycen in hir cruel prido,
 And rekken not to ben an homicide.

This gentil May, fulfilled of pitee,
 Right of hire hond a lettre maketh she, 9870

In which she granteth him hire veray graced
 Ther lacked nought but only day and place;
 Wher that she might unto his lust suffice;
 For it shal be right as he wolde wile.

And whan she saw hire time upon a day
 To visiten this Damian goth this May,
 And sotilly this lettre down the threst
 Under his pilwe; rede sit if him lest.
 She taketh him by the hond; and hard him to
 So secretly that no wight of it wist,
 And bade him ben all hel; and forth she wen
 To January whan he for hire sent.

Up riseth Damian the nexte morwe;
 Al passed was his siknesse and his forwe.
 He kembeth him, he proineth him and piket
 He doth all that his lady lust and liketh;
 And eke to January he goth as lowe
 As ever did a dogge for the bowe.

He is so plesant unto every man,
 (For craft is all, who so that don it can)
 That every wight is fain to speke him good;
 And fully in his ladies grace he flood.

Thus let I Damian about his nede,
 And in my Tale forth I wol procede.

Som clerkes holden that felicitie
 Stant in delit, and therfore certain he,

c. 9888. a dogge for the bowe] A dog used in shoe
 before, ver. 6951.

This noble January, with all his might,
 In honest wise as longeth to a knight,
 Shope him to liven ful deliciously.
 His housing, his array, as honestly. 9900
 To his degree was maked as a kinges.
 Amonges other of his honest thinges
 He had a gardin walled all with ston,
 So fayre a gardin wote I no wher non;
 For out of doute I veraily suppose 9905
 That he that wrote The Romanc of the Rose
 Ne coude of it the beautee wel devise;
 Ne Priapus ne mighte not suffice,
 Though he be god of Gardins, for to tell
 The beautee of the gardin, and the well, 9910
 That stood under a laurer alway grene:
 Ful often tyme he Pluto and his quene
 Proserpina and alle hir Faerie,
 Disporten hem and maken melodie
 About that well, and daunced, as men told. 9915
 This noble knight, this January the old,
 Swiche deintee hath in it to walke and pley,
 That he wol suffre no wight bere the key
 Sauf he himself, for of the smal wicket
 He bare alway of silver a cliket, 9920
 With which whan that him list he it unshette;
 And whan that he wold pay his wives dette
 In somer seson thider wold he go,
 And May his wif, and no wight but they two;

And thinges which that were needful to be had.

He in the garden performed his last will and testament.

And in this wise many a merry day he spent and ended.

Lived this January and freche Maye and June and July.

But worldly joys may not always endure as you shall see.

To January he returned at last, and found him dead.

O foden hap, O foden Fortune that thou art so fickle!

Like to the scorpion so deceivable, which stingeth a man.

That flatrest with thy head when thou art most things.

Thy tayl is death, though thou be cunning as a fox.

O brotel joye! O fowle payson that thou art so deadly!

O monstre! that so softly canst prynceth a man.

Thy giftes under heete of good sheweth, and doth decay.

That thou deethiest both the more and lesse, O January!

Why hast thou January thus deceived, O foden hap!

That haddest him for thy ful frend received.

And now thou hast berast him both his eyes,

For sorwe of which desireth he to dyen.

Alas! this noble January free, how now is he!

Amidde his lust and his prosperitee, and in his prime.

Is waxen blind, and that al fodenly.

He wepeth and he waileth pitoufly,

And therewithall the fire of jalousie.

(Left that his wif shuld fall in som folie).

So brent his herte that he wolde faine.

That som man had both him and hire yfains.

For nother after his deeth ne in his lif.

Ne wold he that she were no love ne wif.

in clothes blake,
 loſt hire make.
 uth or tway 9955
 oth to ſay;
 non other be
 rſitee;
 ay nat forgon
 ore in on; 9960
 ſtrageons,
 n non other hous,
 er the mo,
 o ride of go
 on hire alway; 9965
 h freſhe May,
 enningly,
 n ſodenly
 as hire left:
 te wold to-breſt. 9970
 amiau
 ſt man
 r night ne day
 d to freſhe May,
 iche matere, 9975
 it here,
 ire evermo:
 o and fro,
 lg. *benignly*. Mſs. *A. B.* 1, 2, read
 a glos for the true word, *ben-*
 Mſ. *A.* reads *benyngly*.

And privee signes, wiff he what she ment,
And she knew eke the fin of his entent. 9986

O January! what might it thee avail,
Though thou might seen, as fer as shippes fail?
For as good is blind to deceived be,
As be deceived whan a man may see.
Lo Argus, which that had an hundred eyen, 9989
For all that ever he coude pore or prien,
Yet was he blent, and, God wot, so ben mo,
That wenen wiffly, that it be not so.
Passe over is an ese; I say no more. 9992

This freshe May, of which I spake of yore, 9996
In warm wex hath enprented the cliket
That January bare of the smal wicket,
By which into his gardin oft he went,
And Damian, that knew all hire entent,
The cliket contrefeted prively: 9999
Ther n'is no more to say, but hastily
Som wonder by this cliket shal betide,
Which ye shul heren if ye wol abide.

O noble Ovide! soth sayest thou, God wote,
What sleight is it, if Love be long and hote. 10000

ψ. 9983. *For as good is*] The reading in the text is from *ms. A*; *ms. A* reads thus;

For as good is al blind deceived be.

I should not dislike

*For as good is al blind deceived to be
As be deceived whan a man may see.*

Ver. 10000. *What sleight is it*] These lines are a little different in *ms. C*, *I*, *HA*.

*What sleighte is it, though it be long and hote,
That Love n'il find it out in som manere!*

my lord is not in his mind;
 mine and Thibbs may now here;
 they were kept full long and freit over all,
 as accorded, rowning thurgh a wall,
 wight comf: has founden swiche a sleighte:
 as purpos. Er that daies eighte 10006
 issed of the month of Jul; befill
 many hath caught so greet a will,
 egging of his wif, him for to play
 urdin, and no wight but they tway, 10010
 a morow unto this May said he,
 my wif, my love, my lady free!
 tles vois is herd, myn owen swete!
 ster is gon, with all his raines wete.
 uth now with thin eyen columbine; 10015
 er hen thy breasts than any wine.
 din is enclosed all aboute;
 uth, my white spouse, for out of doute
 ast me wounded in myn herte, o wif!
 in thee n'as never in all thy lif. 10020
 uth, and let us taken our disport;
 hee for my wif and my comfort.
 as olde lewed wordes used he.
 uian a signe made she,
 shuld go before with his cliket. 10025
 mian hath opened the wiket,
 ic stert, and that in swiche manere
 wight might him see neyther yhere,

And still he sit under a bush. And this January, as blis as in a May,
 With Mains in his hand, and no wight gay,
 Into this fryng garden is ago,
 And clapped to the wicket sodenly.

Now wif, good day, here s'is but thou and I,
 That art the creature that I best love;
 For by that Lord that sit in heven above,
 I hadde lever die on a knif
 Than thee offenden; dere trewe wif,
 For Goddes sake thinke how I thee chere,
 Not for no covetise douteles,

But only for the love I had to thee.

And though that I be old and may not see,
 Beth to me trewe, and I wol tell you why;
 Certes three thinges shal ye win therby;

Firft love of Crist, and to yourself honour,
 And all min heritage, toun and tour;

I yeve it you, maketh chartres as you lest:

This shal be don to-morwe er sonne rest,

So wisly God my soule bring to blisse;

I pray you on this covenant ye me kisse.

And though that I be jalous wite me nought;

Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought,

That whan that I consider your beautee,

And therewithall the unlikely elde of me,

I may not certes, though I shulde die,

Forbere to ben out of your compaignie

For veray love ; this is withouten doute :
Now kisse me, wif, and let us rome aboute.

This freshe May, whan she thise wordes herd,
Benignely to January answerd, 10060
But first and forward she began to wepe :
I have, quod she, a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also min honour,
And of my wifhood, thilke tendre flour
Which that I have assured in your hond, 10065
Whan that the preest to you my body bond,
Wherfore I wol answer in this manere,
With leve of you, myn owen lord so dere.

I pray to God that never daw that day
That I ne sterve, as foule as woman may, 10070
If ever I do unto my kin that shame,
Or elles I empeire so my name
That I be false ; and if I do that lakke
Do stripen me and put me in a fakke,
And in the nexte river do me drenche : 10075
I am a gentil woman and no wenche.
Why speke ye thus ? but men ben ever untrewes,
And women han represe of you ay newe.
Ye con non ether daliance, I leve,
But speke to us as of untrust and repreve. 10080

And with that word she saw wher Damian
Sat in the bush, and coughen she began ;
And with hire finger a signe made she
That Damian shuld climbe up on a tre

That charged was with fruit, and up he wotes;
 For veraily he knew all hire entent,
 And every signe that she coude make;
 Wel bet than January her owen make;
 For in a lettre she had told him all
 Of this matere, how that he woude shall.
 And thus I let him sitting in the pery,
 And January and May roming ful story.

Bright was the day, and blew the firmament
 Phebus of gold his streames down hach sent
 To gladen every flour with his warmnesse;
 He was that time in Geminis I gesse,
 But litel fro his declination
 Of Cancer, Joves exaltation.
 And so befell in that bright morwe tide
 That in the gardin, on the fether side,
 Pluto that is the King of Faerie,
 And many a ladie in his compaignie
 Folwing his wif, the Queene Proserpina,
 Which that he ravished out of Ethna,
 While that she gadred floures in the mede,
 (In Claudian ye may the story rede,
 How that hire in his grisely carte he sette)
 This King of Faerie adoun him sette

✧. 10104. *Which that he ravisshed out of Ethna*]. In some other mss. *Etbua*, by a manifest error of th has been changed into *Proserpina*. The passage being th nonsense, other transcribers left out the line, and su this in its stead;

Eche after other, right as ony line.

Upon a benche of turves freshe and grene,
And right anon thus said he to his quene: 10110

My wif, quod he, ther may no wight say nay,
The experience so preveth it every day,
The trefon which that woman doth to man :
Ten hundred thousand stories tell I can
Notable of your untrouth and brotelnesse. 10115

O Salomon ! richest of all richesse,
Fulfilled of sapience and worldly glorie,
Ful worthy ben thy wordes to memorie
To evcry wight that wit and reson can.
Thus praiseth he the bountee yet of man; 10120
Among a thousand men yet fond I on,
But of all women fond I never non.

Thus saith this king, that knewe your wikkednesse :
And Iesus, *filius* Sirach, as I gesse,
He speketh of you but felden reverence. 10125

A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence,
So fall upon your bodies yet to-night.
Ne see ye not this honourable knight?
Because, alas ! that he is blind and old
His owen man shal make him cokewold : 10130
Lo wher he sit, the lechour, in the tree.

Now wol I graunten of my majestee
Unto this olde blinde worthy knight
That he shal have again his eyen sight

*. 10121. *Among a thousand*] *Ecclesiastes* vii. 28. This argument is treated in much the same manner in Melibeus.

Whan that his wif wol don him vntowne
 Than shal he knowen all his fustelinge
 Both in replete of hire and othei suboup.

Ye, Sire, quod Proserpine; and wol ye se
 Now by my modre Ceres soule I swere
 That I shal yeve hire sufficient answerd;
 And alle women after for hire sake
 That though they ben in any gilt yalle
 With face bold they shul hemselve excuse
 And bere hem down that wolben hem accuse
 For lacke of answer non of us shal die;
 Al had ye seen a thing with both your eyen,
 Yet shul we so visage it hardely,
 And wepe, and swere, and chiden, subtilly,
 That ye shul ben as lewed as ben gees.

What rekketh me of your auctoritees?
 I wote wel that this Jewe, this Salomon,
 Fond of us women foolles many on;
 But though that he ne fond no good woman,
 Ther hath yfonden many an other man
 Women ful good, and trewe and vertuous,
 Witnesse on hem that dwelte in Cristes hous;
 With martyrdom they preved hir constance.
 The Romain gestes maken remembrance

¶ 10158. *The Romain-gestes*] He means the collection of stories called *Gesta Romanorum*, of which I once thought to say a few words here, in order to recommend it to a little more attention than it has hitherto met with from those who have written upon the poetical inventions of the middle ages; but as many of the stories in that collection are taken from a treatise of Petrus Alphonsus, *De Clericali Disciplina*, (an older and

But, Sir, we be not minded to it said: . . . 10160

Though that he felt the fond no good woman ; . . .

I pray you take the sentence of the official . -

He went thus, that in fowena haunitos . . .

N'is non but God; ne; neither he no she......

Ev, for the viceroy God that s'istut on IO165

What makes ye for mebbe of Salesmen?

What thought he made a temple, Goddess house?

What though he were rich and glorious?

So made he also a temple of false gods:—

How might he do something that more forbode is?

Parde as faire sa ve-his-mame simplicité !! 10171

He was a lecher and an idolater.

And in his elde he wote God forsake :

And if that God ne haide (as faith the booke)

Spared him for his father's sake, he shoulde . . . IC175

Han lost his name rather than he would.

I fete nat of all the xilatic

That he of women wrote a boterflie.

I am a woman ; needs more I speak,

Or swell unto that time in harts becke: IC180

For fin he said that we ben janglebesses.

As ever mote I broken hole my tresses.

I shal nat sparen for in p'curtelis . . .

To speke him harm that sayth us vilanie.

still more forgotten work) I shall reserve what I have to offer upon this subject till I come to The Tale of Melibeus, where Piers Alphonso is quoted.

Dame, quod this Pluto, be no lenger wroth, IOI
I yeve it up: but sin I swore min oth
That I wold graunten him his fight again,
My word shal stand, that warne I you certain :
I am a king, it sit me not to lie:
And I, quod she, am Quene of Faerie. IOI
Hire answere she shal han I undertake;
Let us no more wordes of it make:
Forsoth, quod he, I wol you not contrary.

Now let us turn again to January,
That in the gardin with his faire May IOI
Singeth wel merier than the popingay;
You love I best, and shal, and other non.

So long about the alleyes is he gon,
Til he was comen again to thilke pery
Wher as this Damian sitteth ful mery IOI
On high, among the freshe leves grene.

This freshe May, that is so bright and shene,
Gan for to like, and said, Alas, my fide!
Now, Sire, quod she, for ought that may betide
I mooste have of the peres that I see IOI
Or I mooste die, so fore longeth me
To eten of the smale peres grene;
Help for hire love that is of heven quene.
I tell you wel a woman in my plit
May have to fruit so gret an appetit IOI
That she may dien but she of it have.

Alas! quod he, that I n'adde here a knave

That coude climbe: alas! alas! (quod he)
 For I am blinde. Ye, Sire, no force, quod she;
 But wold ye vouchesauf, for Goddes sake, 10215
 The pery in with your armes for to take,
 (For wel I wot that ye mistrusten me)
 Than wold I climben wel ynough, (quod she)
 So I my fote might setten on your back.

Certes, said he, therin shal be no lack, 10220
 Might I you helpen with min herte blood.

He stoupeth down, and on his back she stood,
 And caught hire by a twift; and up she goth.

(Ladies, I pray you that ye be not wroth;
 I can nat glose; I am a rude man:) 10225

And sodenly anon this Damian
 Gan pullen up the smock, and in he throng.

And whan that Pluto saw this grete wrong
 To January he yaf again his fight,
 And made him see as wel as ever he might; 10230

§. 10227. *Gan pullen*] After this verse the edit. (except *Ct.* 2, and *Pynf.* 1, 2,) have eight others of the lowest and most unperfunous ribaldry that can well be conceived. It would be a mere loss of time to argue from the lines themselves that they were not written by Chaucer, as we have this short and decisive reason for rejecting them, that they are not found in any one ms. of authority. They are not found in mss. *A. C.* 1, *J. k.* 1, 2. *HA. B. C. D. G. Bod. α. E. γ. δ. ε. ζ. C. 2. T. N. C.* In mss. *F. H. I. W.* either the whole Tale or that part where they might be looked for is wanting. The only tolerable note in which I have seen them is *F.* and there they have been added in the margin by a later hand, perhaps not older than Caxton's first edition.

But on his

Up to the tree he

And saw how Damian his wife

In swiche manere it may be

But if I wolde speke uncer-

And up he gaf a howling and a cry,

As doth the moother when the child

Out! helpe! alas! harow the gan to cry;

O stronge lady here, what doest thou?

And she answered, Sire, what ailoth you?

Have patience and reison in your minde,

I have you holpen on both your eyen blinde.

Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lien;

As me was taught to helpen with your see

Was nothing better for to make you see

—a stroge with a man upon a tree:

—it in ful good entent.

—ate in it went.

—to dien

I show it with mine eyes;
 changed by the huffe;
 sell me, my medicine at half;
 if that ye mighten see 10255
 say thise wordes unto me,
 gilding, and no perfit sight.
 he, as well as ever I might
 (God) with both mine eyes two,
 with his thought he did thee fo. 10260
 re make; good Sir; quod he;
 And for I have made you see:
 me, that ever I was so kind.
 he, quod he, let it passe out of mind:
 my life, and if I have misfild 10265
 as so as I am evil appaid:
 idres soule I wende have sein
 is Damian had by thee lein,
 r mock had lein upon his brest.
 quod he, ye may wene as you left: 10270
 nan that waketh of his slepe
 fodenly wel taken kepe
 g, ne seen it partly,
 e adawed veraily:
 an that long hath blind ybe 10275
 fodenly so wel ysee,

e make, ye make] The final *n* has been added
 rity, and unneccissarily. This line is very oddly

A. 1, 2;

a may ye quod he.

7.

R.

And whan he thus had caught his sight again
 Ne was ther never man of thing so fain :
 But on his wif his thought was ever mo.

Up to the tree he cast his eyes two,
 And saw how Damian his wife had dressed 10235
 In swiche manere it may not ben expressed,
 But if I wolde speke uncerteily ;
 And up he yaf a roving and a cry,
 As doth the mother whan the child shal die :
 Out ! helpe ! alas ! harowt he gan to cry ; 10240
 O stronge lady floure, what dost thou ?
 And she answered, Sire, what ailoth you ?
 Have patience and reson in your minde,
 I have you holpen on both your eyen blinde.
 Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lien, 10245
 As me was taught to helpen with your eyen
 Was nothing better for to make you see
 Than strogle with a man upon a tree :
 God wot I did it in ful good entent.

Strogle ! quod he ; ye, algate in it went. 10250
 Gode yeve you both on shames deth to dien ;

ψ. 10240. *Out ! helpe !*] Two lines which follow this in the common editt. are omitted for the reasons stated in the note upon ver. 10227 ; and I shall take the same liberty, upon exactly the same grounds, with four more which have been inserted in those editt. after ver. 10250.

ψ. 10241. *O stronge lady floure*] As all the best mss. support this reading I have not departed from it, for fear *floure* should have some signification that I am not aware of. Some mss. have *floure*, ms. *G. boure*, edit. *Ca. 2, lore ; bōra, meretrix, island,*

First whan his sight is newe comen agein,
 As he that hath a day or two yfein.
 Til that your sight yfateled be a while
 Ther may ful many a fighte you begile. IC
 Beware, I pray you, for by heven King
 Ful many a man weneth to see a thing,
 And it is all another than it semeth :
 He which that misconceiveth oft misdemeth.

And with that word she lep down fro the tree. IC
 'This January who is glad but he?
 He kisseth hire and clippeth hire ful oft,
 And on hire wombe he stroketh hire ful soft,
 And to his paleis home he hath hire lad.
 Now, goode men, I pray you to be glad. IC
 Thus endeth here my Tale of Januarie ;
 God blesse us, and his moder Seinte Marie ! IC

THE SQUIERES PROLOGUE.

By Goddes mercy, sayde oure Hoste tho,
 Now swiche a wif I preie God kepe me fro.
 I.o, swiche sleightes and subtilitees IC
 In women ben ; for ay as besy as bees

✧. 10193.] It has been said in the *Discourse*, &c. §. 23 this new Prologue has been prefixed to The Squires' Tale the authority of the best mss. 'They are as follows ; A. Ask. 1, 2, HA. D. Bod. α. γ. δ. The concurrence of the five mss. would alone have been more than sufficient to weigh the authorities in favour of the other Prologue. Ed. (though it has not this Prologue' agrees with these mss. in calling 'The Squires' Tale after 'The Marchantes.

Ben they us fely men for to deccive,
 And from a sothe wol they ever weive:
 By this Marchantes Tale it preveth wel.
 But nathcles, as trewe as any flele 10300
 I have a wif, though that she poure be,
 But of hire tonge a labbing shrewe is she;
 And yet she hath an hepe of vices mo.
 Therof no force; let all swiche thinges go.
 But wete ye what? in conseil be it seyde, 10305
 Me reweth fore I am unto hire teyde;
 For and I shulde rekene every vice
 Which that she hath, ywis I were to nice;
 And cause why, it shulde reported be
 And told to hire of som of this compaignie, 10310
 (Of whom it nedeth not for to declare,
 Sin women connen utter swiche chaffare)
 And eke my wit sufficeth not therto
 To tellen all; wherfore my Tale is do.
 Squier, come ner, if it youre wille be, 10315
 And say somwhat of love, for certes ye
 Connen theron as moche as any man.
 Nay, Sire, quod he, but swiche thing as I can

♀. 10298. *wive*] This verb is generally used transitively,
 to wave, to reinquith, a thing; but it has also a neuter signifi-
 cation, to depart, as here. See also ver. 4728, 9357.

♀. 10312. *Sin women connen utter*] Ms. A. reads *oute*, but others
 have *utter*, which I believe is right, though I confess that I do
 not clearly understand the passage. The phrase has occurred
 before, ver. 6103;

With langer *utten* we all our *chaffare*.

With hertly wille, for I wol not rebelle
 Agein your lust, a Tale wol I telle.
 Have me excused if I speke amis :
 My wille is good ; and lo, my Tale is this.

THE SQUIERES TALE.

AT Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,
 Ther dwelt a king that werreied Ruffie,
 Thurgh which ther died many a doughty ma
 This noble king was cleped Cambuscan,
 Which in his time was of so gret renoun
 That ther n'as no wher in no regioun
 So excellent a lord in alle thing ;
 Him lacked nought that longeth to a king,
 As of the secte of which that he was borne.
 He kept his lay to which he was ysworne,
 And therto he was hardy, wise, and riche,
 And pitous and just, and alway yliche,
 Trewe of his word, benigne and honourabl
 Of his corage as any centre stable,
 Yong, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous,
 As any bacheler of all his hous.
 A faire person he was and fortunate,
 And kept alway so wel real estat

[*The Squire's Tale*] The King of Araby sendith to the
 King of Sarra a horse and a sword of rare qualite,
 daughter Canace a glas and a ring, by the virtue of
 which telleth the language of all fowles. Much of
 the story is lost or else never finished by Chaucer. *Erry.*

That ther n'as no wher swiche another man.

This noble king, this Tartr Cambuscan,
Hadde two sones by Elfeta his wif,
Of which the eldest sone highte Algaris,
That other was ycleped Camballo. 10345

A daughter had this worthy king also,
That yongest was, and highte Canace:
But for to tellen you all hire beautes
It lish not in my tonge ne in any conning;
I dare not undertake so high a thing: 10350

Min English eke is unufficient;
It maiste ben a rethor excellent,
That coude his colours longing for that art,
If he shuld hire descriven any part:
I am non swiche; I mote speke as I can. 10355

And so befel that whan this Cambuscan
Hath twenty winter borne his diademe,
As he was wont fro yere to yere l' deme,
He let the feste of his nativitee
Don crien thurghout Sarra his citee 10360
The last idus of March after the yere.

Phebus the sonne ful jolif was and clere,
For he was nigh his exaltation
In Martes face, and in his mansion

*. 10344. *Of which the eldest sone*] I have added *sonc* for the sake of the metre.

*. 10364. *and in his mansion*] *His* refers to Mars, and not to the sun. "Aries est l'exaltation du Soleil ou 19 degre. et si est
"Aries maison de Mars," *Calend. des Berg.* sign. l. ult. L^{co}

R. iij.

In Aries, the colosike hote signe : 10365
 Ful lusty, was the wether and benigne;
 For which the foules again the sonne shene :
 What for the feson and the yonge grene
 Ful loude songen hir affections :
 Hem semed han gotten hem protections 10370
 Against the swerd of winter kene and cold.

This Cambuscan, of which I have you told,
 In real vestiments, sit on his deis
 With diademe, ful high in his paleis,
 And holt his feste so solempne and so riche 10375
 That in this world ne was ther non it liche,
 Of which if I shal tellen all the array
 Than wold it occupie a somera day;
 And eke it nedeth not for to devise
 At every cours the order of hir service : 10380
 I wol not tellen of hir strange sewes,
 Ne of hir swannes ne hir heronsewes :

was the *manfion* of the sun, *ibid.* sign. K. 1. Aries is there also
 said to be *signe chault et sec*.

¶ 10381. *strange sewes*] A sewer was an officer so called from
 his placing the dishes upon the table. *Affeur*, Fr. from *affair*,
 to place. In the establishment of the king's household there are
 still four Gentlemen Sewers. *Sewes* here seem to signify dishes,
 from the same original, as *assiete*, in Fr. still signifies a little dish
 or plate. See *Gower, Conf. Amant.* fol. 115, b.;

The fleshe, whan it was so to-bewe,
 She taketh, and maketh therof a *sewe*.—

¶ 10382. *heronsewes*] *Heronceaux*, Fr. according to the
 Glossary. At the intronization of Archbishop Nevil, 6 Edw. IV.
 there were *heronceaux* iiii C. *Rel. Colled.* vol. vi. 2. At ano-
 ther feast in 1530 we read of 16 *heronsewes*, every one 12d.
St. A's D. C. vol. ii. 12.

Eke in that lond, as tellen knightes old,
 Ther is som mete that is ful deintee hold,
 That in this lond men recche of it ful smal: 10385
 Ther n'is no man that may reporten ek
 I wol not taries you, for it is prime,
 And for it is so fruit, but losse of time:
 Unto my purpose I wol have recours.

And so befell that after the thridde cours, 10390
 While that this king sit thus in his nobley,
 Herking his ministralles hir thinges ploy,
 Before him at his bord deliciously,
 In at the halle dore al sodenly
 Ther came a knight upon a steed of braas, 10395
 And in his hond a bred mirrour of glas;
 Upon his thombe he had of gold a ring,
 And by his side a naked swerd hanging;
 And up he rideth to the highe bord.
 In all the halle ne wether spoke a word 10400
 For mervaille of this knight; him to behold
 Ful hefly they waiten yong and old.

This strange knight that come thus sodenly,
 Al armed save his hed ful richely,
 Salueth king and quene, and lordes alle, 10405
 By order as they saten in the halle,
 With so high reverence and observance,
 As wold in speche as in his contenance,
 That Gawain with his olde curtesie,
 Though he were come agen out of Faerie, 10410

Ne coude him not amenden with a word:
 And after this befor the highe lord
 He with a manly vois sayd his messagge,
 After the forme used in his langage,
 Withouten vice of fillable or of lettere. 104
 And for his tale shulde seme the better,
 Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
 As togeth art of speche hem that it lere.
 Al be it that I cannot sounce his stile,
 Ne cannot climben over so high a stile, 104
 Yet say I this, as to comun entent,
 Thus much amounteth all that ever he ment;
 If it so be that I have it in mind.

He sayd, The King of Arabie and of Inde,
 My liege Lord, on this solempne day, 104
 Salueth you as he best can and may,
 And sendeth you, in honour of your feste,
 By me, that am al redy at your heste,
 This stede of bras, that cfly and wel
 Can in the space of a day naturel 104
 (This is to sayn, in four-and-twenty houres)
 Wher so you list, in drougt or elles shoures,
 Beren your body into every place
 To which your herte willeth for to pace,
 Withouten wemme of you thurgh foule or faire;
 Or if you list to fleen as high in the aire 104
 As doth an egle, whan him list to fore,
 This same stede shal bere you evermore,

Withouten harme, till ye be ther you left,
(I though that ye slepen on his back or rest) 10440
And turne again with writhing of a pin ;
He that it wrought he coude many a gin ;
He waited many a constellation
Or he had don this operation,
And knew ful many a sele and many a bond. 10445

This mirrour eke that I have in min hond
Hath swiche a might that men may in it see
Whan ther shal falle ony adverstitee
Unto your regne or to yourself also,
And openly who is your frend or fo ; 10450
And over all this, if any lady bright
Hath set hire herte on any maner wight,
If he be false she shal his trefon see,
His newe love, and all his subtiltee,
So openly that ther shal nothing hide. 10455

Wherefore again this lusty somer tide
This mirrour and this ring, that ye may se,
He hath sent to my Lady Canace,
Your excellent doughter that is here.

The vertue of this ring, if ye wol here, 10460
Is this, that if hire list it for to were
Upon hire thombe, or in hire purse it berc,
Ther is no foule that fleeth under heven
That she ne shal wel understond his steven,
And know his mening openly and plaine, 10465
And answere him in his langage again ;

And every gras that groweth upon rote
 She shal eke know; and whom it wol do bete,
 All be his woundes never so depe and wide. 10469

This naked swerd, that hangeth by my side,
 Swiche vertue hath, that what man that it smite,
 Thurghout his armure it wol herve and bite;
 Were it as thicke as is a branched oke;
 And what man that is wounded with the stroke
 Shal never be hole, til that you lift of grace 10475
 To stroken him with the platte in thilke place
 Ther he is hurt; this is as much to sain,
 Ye moten with the platte swerd again
 Stroken him in the wound and it wol close.
 This is the veray soth withouten glose 10480
 It failleth not while it is in your hold.

And whan this knight hath thus his tale told
 He rideth out of halle, and down he light.
 His stede, which that shone as soune bright,
 Stant in the court as stille as any ston. 10485
 This knight is to his chambre ladde anon,
 And is unarmed, and to the mete yfette.
 Thise presents ben ful richelich yfette,
 This is to sain, the swerd and the mirroure,
 And borne anon into the highe tour 10490
 With certain officers ordained therfore;
 And unto Canace the ring is bore
 Solenmpnely, ther she sat at the table.
 But fikerly, withouten any fable,

The hors of bras, that may not be remued, IC495
 It stant as it were to the ground yglued :
 Ther may no man out of the place it drive
 For non engine of windas or polive :
 And cause why, for they con not the craft,
 And therfore in the place they han it laft IC500
 'Til that the knight hath taught hem the manere
 To voiden him, as ye shal after here.

Gret was the prees that swarmed to and fro
 To gauren on this hors that stondeth so ;
 For it so high was, and so brod and long, IC505
 So wel proportioned for to be strong,
 Right as it were a stede of Lumbardie,
 Therwith so horsly and so quik of eye
 As it a gentil Poileis courser were ;
 For certes fro his tayl unto his ere IC510
 Nature ne art ne coud him not amend
 In no degree, as all the peple wend.

But evermore hir moste wonder was
 How that it coude gon and was of bras :

✧. IC509. *a gentil Poileis courser*] A horse of Apulia, which in old French was usually called *Poille*. The horses of that country were much esteemed. *Mf. Bod.* James VI. 142. Richard Archbishop of Armagh, in the 14th century, says in praise of our St. Thomas, "Quod nec mulus Hispaniæ, nec dextrarius Apuliæ, nec repedo Æthiopiæ, nec elephante Alie, nec camelus Syriæ, hoc a sinu nostra Angliæ aptior five audentior invenitur ad prælia." He had before informed his audience that "Thomas Anglice idem est quod Thom. Atinus." There is a patent in Rymer, 2 Edw. II. "De dextrariis in Lumbardis emendis."

It was of Faerie, as the peple semed: 10
 Diverse folk diversely han demed:
 As many heds as many wittes ben.
 They murmured as doth a swarme of bees,
 And maden skilles after hir fantasies;
 Reherfing of the olde pootries, 10
 And sayd it was ylike the Pegasee,
 The hors that hadde winges for to fleo,
 Or elles it was the Grekes hors Sinon,
 That broughte Troye to destruction,
 As men moun in thise olde gostes rede. 10

Min herte (quod on) is evermore in drede;
 I trow som men of armes ben therin,
 That shapen hem this citee for to win:
 It were right good that al swiche thing were knowe
 Another rownded to his felaw low, 10
 And sayd, He lieth, for it is rather like
 An apparence ymade by som magike,
 As jogelours plaien at thise festes grete.
 Of sondry doutes thus they jangle and trete,
 As lewed peple demen comunly 10
 Of thinges that ben made more subtilly
 Than they can in hir lewednesse comprehende:
 They demen gladly to the badder ende.

And som of hem wondred on the mirrour
 That born was up in to the maister tour, 10

&. 10523. *the Grekes hors Sinon*] This is rather an awkward expression for—*the horse of Sinon the Greek*, or, as we might say, *Sinon the Greek's horse*.

How men mighte in it swiche thinges see.

Another answerd and sayd, It might wel be
Naturally by compositions

Of angles and of flie reflectione;

And saide that in Rome was swiche on. 10545

They speke of Alhazen and Vitellon,

And Aristotle, that writen in hir lives

Of queinte mirroures and of prospectives,

As knowen they that han hir bookes herd.

And other folk han wondred on the swerd 10550

That wolde percen thurghout every thing;

And tell in speche of Telephus the king,

And of Achilles for his queinte spere,

For he coude with it bothe hele and dere,

Right in swiche wise as men may with the swerd

Of which right now ye have yourselven herd. 10556

They speken of sondry harding of metall,

And speken of medicines therwithall,

And how and whan it shuld yharded be,

Which is unknow algates unto me. 10560

Tho spoken they of Canacees ring,

And saiden all that swiche a wonder thing

✧. 10546. *Alhazen and Vitellon*] *Alhazeni et Vitellonis Optice* are extant, printed at Basii 1572. The first is supposed by his editor to have lived about A. D. 1100, and the second to A. D. 1270.

✧. 10561. *Canacees*] This word should perhaps have had an accent on the first *Canacees*, to shew that it is to be pronounced as of four syllables. See also below, ver. 10945;

And swouneth etc in *Canacees* barne.

Volume III.

S

Of craft of ringes herd they never none,
 Save that he Moyses and King Salomon
 Hadden a name of conning in swiche art. 105
 Thus fain the peple, and drawen hem apart.

But natheles som saiden that it was
 Wonder to maken of ferne ashen glas,
 And yet is glas nought like ashen of ferne;
 But for they han yknowen it so ferne, 110
 Therfore ceseth hir jangling and hir wonder.

As fore wondren som on cause of thonder,
 On ebbe and flood, on gossomer and on mist,
 And on all thing til that the cause is wist.

Thus janglen they, and demen and devise, 115
 Til that the king gan fro his bord arise.

Phebus hath left the angle meridional,
 And yet ascending was the beste real,
 The gentil Leon, with his Aldrian,
 Whan that this Tartre king, this Cambuscan, 120
 Rose from his bord, ther as he sat ful hie :
 Before him goth the loude minstrelcie,
 Til he come to his chambre of parements,
 Ther as they founden divers instruments,
 That it is like an heven for to here. 125

Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere,

¶. 10570. *yknowen it so ferne*] Known it so before. I take to be a corruption of *forne*, (*fora*, Sax.) So in *Tro.* ver. 1 *ferne* *yeze* seems to signify former years. In *P.P.* fol. 80, b. *ago* is used as long ago.

¶. 10682. *chambre of parements*] *Chambre de pareme* translated by Cotgrave the presence chamber, and *Li de*

For in the Fifth hir lady sat ful hie,
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.

This noble king is set upon his trone,
This straunge knight is fet to him ful sone, 10790
And on the daunce he goth with Canace.

Here is the revell and the jolitee
That is not able a dull man to devise :
He must han knowen Love and his servise,
And ben a festlich man, as fresh as May, 10795
That shulde you devisen swiche array.

Who coude tellen you the forme of daunces
So uncouth, and so freshe contenaunces,
Swiche subtil lokings and distimulings,
For dred of jalous mennes apperceivings? 10800
No man but Launcelot, and he is ded;
Therefore I passe over all this lustyhed;
I say no more, but in this jolineffe
I lete hem til men to the souper hem dresse.

The steward bit the spices fur to hie, 10805
And eke the win, in all this melodie;

ment a bed of state. *Paréments* originally signified all sorts of ornamental furniture or clothes, from *parer*, Fr. to adorn. See ver. 2503, and *Leg. of G. W. Dido*, ver. 181;

To dauncing *chambres*, ful of *parémentes*,
Of riche beddes and of pavémentes,
This *Encas* is ledde after the mete.

The Italians have the same expression; *Id. d. Conc. Trident.* l. iii.; "Il Pontefice—ritornato alla camera da' paramenti co' "Cardinall."—

§. 10527. in the *Fif*] See the note on ver. 6284.

The ushers and the squieris ben gon,
 The spices and the win is come anon:
 They ete and drinke, and whan this had an end
 Unto the temple, as reson was, they wend: 10610
 The service don they soupen all by day.

What nedeth you reherfen hir array?
 Eche man wot wel that at a kinges fest
 Is plentee to the most and to the lest,
 And deintees mo than ben in my knowing. 10615

At after souper goth this noble king
 To seen this hors of bras, with all a route
 Of lordes and of ladies him aboute.
 Swiche wondring was ther on this hors of bras,
 That sin the gret assage of Troye was 10620
 Ther as men wondred on an hors also,
 Ne was ther swiche a wondring as was tho.
 But, finally, the king asketh the knight
 The vertue of this courser and the might,
 And praied him to tell his governaunce. 10625

This hors anon gan for to trip and daunce,
 Whan that the knight laid hond up on his rein,
 And saide, Sire, ther n'is no more to fain,
 But whan you list to riden any where
 Ye moten trill a pin stant in his ere, 10630
 Which I shal tellen you betwixt us two,
 Ye moten nempne him to what place also,
 Or to what contree, that you list to ride.
 And whan ye come ther as you list abide

Bid him descend, and trill another pin, 10635
 (For therin lieth the effect of all the gin)
 And he wol doun descend and don your will,
 And in that place he wol abiden still;
 Though al the world had the contrary swore
 He shal not thennes be drawe ne be bore : 10640
 Or if you list to bid him thennes gon
 Trille this pin, and he wol vanish anon
 Out of the sight of every maner wight,
 And come agen, be it by day or night,
 Whan that you list to clepen him again 10645
 In swiche a guise as I shal to you fain
 Betwixen you and me, and that ful sone.
 Ride whan you list, ther n'is no more to done.

Enfourmed whan the king was of the knight,
 And hath conceived in his wit aright 10650
 The maner and the forme of all this thing,
 Ful glad and blith this noble doughty king
 Repaireth to his revel as beforne.
 The bridel is in to the tour yborne,
 And kept among his jewels lefe and dere : 10655
 The hors vanisht, I n'ot in what manere,
 Out of hir sight; ye get no more of me :
 But thus I lete in lust and jolitee
 This Cambuscan his lordes festeying
 Til that wel nigh the day began to spring. 10660

✥. 10660. *Til that wel nigh*] *That* has been added for the sake
 of the metre. We might read, with some mss.;

Til wel nigh the day began for to spring.

Parsifalle.

The norice of degestien, the slepe,
 Gan on hem winke, and had hem taken hepe
 That mochel drinke and labour wol have rest,
 And with a galping mouth hem all he krest;
 And said, that it was time to lie adoun, 10665
 For blood was in his dominatioun:
 Cherisheth blood, natures frend, quod he.

They thanken him galping, by two, by thres;
 And every wight gan drawe him to his rest,
 As slepe hem bade; they toke it for the best. 10670

Hir dremes shul not now be told for me;
 Ful were hir hedes of fumositee,
 That causeth dreame, of which ther is no charge:
 They slepen til that it was prime large,
 The mooste part, but it were Canace; 10675
 She was ful mesurable, as women be;
 For of hire father had she take hire leve
 To gon to rest sone after it was eve;
 Hire liste not appalled for to be,
 Nor on the morwe unfeſtliche for to see, 10680
 And slept hire firſte ſlepe, and than awoke:
 For ſwicke a joy ſhe in hire herte toke
 Both of hire queinte ring and of hire mirrour,
 That twenty time ſhe chaunged hire colour.

*. 10663. *That mochel drinke and labour*] 80 mss. C. 1, HA.
 12 mss. A. it is, *That mi: the and labour*; in *Ash.* 1, 2, *That af-
 ter moche labour*; in ſeveral other mss. and editt. *Ca.* 1, 2, *That
 moche mete and labour*. We muſt ſearch further, I apprehend,
 for the true reading.

And in hire slepe right for the impressioun 10685
Of hire mirrour she had a visioun;
Wherfore or that the sonne gan up glide
She clepeth upon hire maistresse hire beside,
And saide that hire luste for to arise.

Thise olde women that ben gladly wise, 10690
As is hire maistresse, answered hire anon,
And said, Madam, whider wol ye gon
Thus erly? for the folk ben all in rest.

I wol, quod she, arisen (for me left
No longer for to slepe) and walken aboute. 10695

Hire maistresse clepeth women a gret route,
And up they risen wel a ten or twelve;
Up riseth freshe Canace hireselfe,
As rody and bright as the yonge sonne
That in the Ram is foure degrees yronne; 10700
No higher was he whan she redy was;
And forth she walketh esily a pas,
Arrayed after the lusty seson fote
Lightely for to playe, and walken on fote,
Nought but with five or sixe of hire meinie, 10705
And in a trenche forth in the park goth she.

The vapour which that fro the erthe glode
Maketh the sonne to seme rody and brode;
But natheles it was so faire a sight
That it made all hir hertes for to light, 10710
What for the seson and the morwening,
And for the foules that she herde sing,

For right anon she wiste what they meide
Right by hir song, and knew al hir entent.

The knotte why that every tale is tolke; 10715
If it be taried til the lust be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore,
The savour passeth ever longer the more
For fulsumnesse of the prolixitee;
And by that same reson thinketh me 10740
I shuld unto the knotte condescende,
And maken of hire walking sone an ende.

Amidde a tree for-dry, as white as chalk,
As Canace was playing in hire walk,
Ther sat a faucon over hire hed ful hie 10745
That with a pitous vois so gan to crie,
That all the wood resounded of hire cry,
And beten had hireself so pitoussly
With both hire winges til the rede blood
Ran endelong the tree ther as she stood; 10750
And ever in on alway she cried and shrighit,
And with hire bek hireselven she so twight,
That ther n'is tigre ne no cruel best
That dwelleth other in wood or in forest
That n'olde han wept, if that he wepen coude, 10755
For forwe of hire, she shrighit alway so loude.

For ther was never yet no man on live,
If that he coude a faucon wel describe,
That herde of swiche another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage as of gentileffe 10760

Of shape, of all that might yrekened be:
 A faucon peregrine semed she
 Of fremde lond, and ever as she stood
 She swouned now and now for lack of blood,
 Til wel neigh is she fallen fro the tree. 10745

This faire kinges doughter Canace,
 That on hire finger bare the queinte ring,
 Thurgh which she understood wel every thing
 That any foule may in his leden fain,
 And coude answere him in his leden again, 10750
 Hath understonden what this faucon seyde,
 And wel neigh for the routhe almost she deyde;
 And to the tree she goth ful hastily,
 And on this faucon loketh pitously,
 And held hire lap abrode, for wel she wist 10755
 The faucon muste fallen from the twist
 Whan that she swouned next, for faute of blood.
 A longe while to waiten hire she stood,
 Til at the last she spake in this manere
 Unto the hawk, as ye shul after here: 10760

ψ. 10742. *A faucon peregrine*] This species of falcon is thus described in the *Treſor de Brunet Latin*, P. 1, Cb. *Des faucons*, ms. Reg. 19 C. X.; "La seconde lignie est *faucons*, que hom apele *pelerins*, par ce que nus ne trove son ni. ains est pris autreci come en *pelerinage*. et est mult legiers a norrir, et mult cortois, et vaillans, et de bone maniere" Chaucer adds, that this falcon was of *fremde* or *fremed lond*, from a foreign country.

ψ. 10749. *leden*] *Language*, Sax. a corruption of Latin. Dante uses *Latino* in the same sense, *Canz.* 1;

E canine gli augelli
 Ciascuno in suo *Latino*.

What is the cause, if it be for to tell,
That ye ben in this furial peine of hell?
Quod Canace unto this hauk above;
Is this for sorwe of deth or losse of love?
For as I trow thise be the causes two
That causen most a gentil herte wo.
Of other harme it nedeth not to speke,
For ye yourself upon yourself awreke,
Which preveth wel that other ire or drede
Mote ben encheson of your cruel dede,
Sin that I se non other wight you chace.
For the love of God as doth yourselven gra
Or what may be your helpe? for west ne e
Ne saw I never er now no brid ne best
That ferde with himself so pitoussly.
Ye sle me with your sorwe veraily,
I have of you so gret compassion.
For Goddes love come fro the tree adour
And as I am a kinges daughter trewe,
If that I veraily the causes knewe
Of your disese, if it lay in my might
I wold amend it or that it were night,
As wisly help me the gret God of kin
And herbes shal I right ynough yfind
To helen with your hurtles hastily.
Tho shright this faucon yet more
Than ever she did, and fell to groun
And lith aswouned as ded as lith a fl

PIERRES TALE.

lappe hire take
 of fwoune awake, 10790
 f fwoune abraide
 len thus she sayde :
 one in gentil herte
 (peines smerte)
 en may see 10795
 auctoritee,

i gentilleffe.
 n my distresse
 anace,
 ignitec 10800
 rinciples hath set.
 fare the bet,
 our herte free,
 r yware by me,
 ifed is the leon, 10805
 d that conclusion,
 fer and a space,
 ffen er I pace.
 i hire forwe told
 to water wold, 10810
 l hire to be still,
 thus she said hire till :
 as that ilke day!)
 of marble gray
 ng ailed me; 10815
 aduerfitee

Til I coud flee ful high under the skie.

Tho dwelled a tercelet me faste by
That semed welle of aile gentilleſſe,
Al were he ful of trefon and falſeneſſe. I
It was ſo wrapped under humble chere,
And under hew of trouth in ſwiche manere,
Under plesance, and under beſy peine,
That no wight coud have wend he coude ſeine,
So depe in greyn he died his coloures. I
Right as a ſerpent hideth him under floures,
Til he may ſee his time for to bite,
Right ſo this god of Loves hypocrite
Doth ſo his ceremonies and obeiſance,
And kepeth in ſemblant alle his obſervance I
That ſouneth unto gentilleſſe of love.
As on a tombe is all the faire above,
And under is the corps, ſwiche as ye wote,
Swiche was this hypocrite both cold and hote,
And in this wiſe he ſerved his entent, I
That ſave the fend non wiſte what he ment;
Til he ſo long had weped and complained,
And many a yere his ſervice to me fained,
Till that min herte, to pitous and to nice,
Al innocent of his crowned malice, I

¶ 10840. *crowned malice*] The reader of taſte will diſpleaſed, I truſt, at my having received this reading of authority of mſ. A. only: the common reading is *cruel*

For-fered of his deth, as thoughte me,
 Upon his othes and his feuretee
 Graunted him love on this condition,
 That evermo min honour and renoun
 Were saved, both privee and apert; 10845
 This is to say, that after his desert
 I yave him all min herte and all my thought,
 (God wote and he that other wayes nought)
 And toke his herte in chaunge of min for ay.
 But soth is said, gon sithen is many a day 10850
 A trewe wight and a theef thinken not on.

And whan he saw the thing so fer ygon,
 That I had granted him fully my love,
 In swiche a guise as I have said above,
 And yeven him my trewe herte as free 10855
 As he swore that he yaf his herte to me,
 Anon this tigre, ful of doublenesse,
 Fell on his knees with so gret humbleffe,
 With so high reverence, as by his chere,
 So like a gentil lover of manere, 20860
 So ravished, as it semed, for the joye,
 That never Jafon ne Paris of Troye,
 Jafon! certes ne never other man
 Sin Lamech was, that alderfirst began
 To loven two, as writen folk beforne, 10865
 Ne never sithen the first man was borne,
 Ne coude man by twenty thousand part
 Contrefete the sophimes of his art,

THE SQUIERES TALE.

Ne were worthy to unbocke his galoche,
 Ther doublenesse of faining shuld approche, 1087a
 Ne coude so thanke a wight as he did me.

His maner was an heven for to see
 To any woman, were she never so wise,

So painted he and kempt at pointit devise
 As wel his wordes as his contenance :

And I so loved him for his obeisance,
 And for the trouthe I demed in his herte;

That if so were that any thing him smerte,
 Al were it never so lite, and I it wist,

Me thought I felt deth at myn herte twist. 1088
 And, shortly, so ferforth this thing is went,

That my will was his willes instrument;
 This is to say, my will obeyed his will

In alle thing, as fer as reson fill,
 Keping the boundes of my worship ever :

Ne never had I thing so lese ne lever
 As him, God wot, ne never shal no mo.

This lasteth lenger than a yere or two,
 That I supposed of him nought but good :

But, finally, thus at the last it stood,
 That Fortune wolde that he muste twin

Out of that place which that I was in.
 Wher me was wo it is no question;

I cannot make of it description :
 For o thing dare I tellen boldely,
 I know what is the peine of deth therby

Swiche harme I felt, for he ne might byleve.

So on a day of me he toke his leve,
 So forweful eke, that I wend veraily
 That he had felt as mochel harme as I, 10900
 Whan that I herd him speke and saw his hewe:
 But natheles I thought he was so trewe,
 And eke that he repairen shuld again
 Within a litel while, soth for to fain,
 And reson wold eke that he muste go 10905
 For his honour, as often happeth so,
 That I made vertue of necessitye,
 And toke it wel sin that it muste be.
 As I best might I hid fro him my sorwe,
 And toke him by the hond, Seint John to borwe,
 And said him thus, Lo, I am youre all, 10911
 Beth swiche as I have ben to you and shall.

What he answerd it nedeth not reherse;
 Who can say bet than he, who can do werse?
 Whan he hath al wel said than hath he done; 10915
 Therfore behoveth him a ful long sponc
 That shal ete with a send; thus herd I say.

So at the last he muste forth his way;
 And forth he fleeth, til he come ther him lest.
 Whan it came him to purpos for to rest, 10920
 I trow that he had thilke text in mind,
 That alle thing repairing to his kind

†. 10921. *thilke text*] Boethius, l. iii. met. 2;
 Repetunt proprios quæque recursum,
 Redituque suo singula gaudent—

Gladeth himself; thus fain men as I gesse:
 Men loven of propre kind newefangelnesse,
 As bridde don that men in cages fede; 10913
 For though thou night and day take of from hede,
 And strow hir cage faire and soft as fluke,
 And give hem sugre, honny, bred, and milke,
 Yet right anon as that his dore is up
 He with his feet wol spurnen doun his cup, 10930
 And to the wood he wol and wormes ete;
 So newefangel ben they of hir mete,
 And loven noveltees of propre kind;
 No gentilleffe of blood ne may hem bind.

So ferd this tercelet, alas the day! 10933
 'Though he were gentil borne, and fresh, and gay,
 And goodly for to seen, and humble, and free.
 He saw upon a time a kite flee,
 And sodenly he loved this kite so
 That all his love is clene from me ago, 10940
 And hath his trouthe falsed in this wise.
 Thus hath the kite my love in hire service,
 And I am lorn withouten remedy.

And with that word this faucon gan to cry,
 And swouneth eft in Canacees barme. 10943
 Gret was the sorwe for that hankes harme

which our Author has thus translated; "All thynges that
 "ayen to hir propre cours, and all thynges rejoycen on hir
 "retourninge agayne to hir nature." The comparison of the
 bird is taken from the same place.

That Canace and all hire women made;
 They n'isten how they might the faucon glade:
 But Canace home bereth hire in hire lap,
 And softly in phyltres gan hire wrap 10950
 Ther as she with hire bek had hurt hireselfe.

Now cannot Canace but herbes delve
 Out of the ground, and maken salves newe
 Of herbes precious and fine of hewe 10955
 To helen with this hawk: fro day to night
 She doth hire besynesse and all hire might.
 And by hire beddes hed she made a mew,
 And covered it with velouettes blew,
 In signe of trouth that is in woman sene,
 And all without the mew is peynted grene, 10960
 In which were peynted all thise false foules,
 As ben thise tidifes, tercelettes, and owles,
 And pica, on hem for to cry and chide,
 Right for despit were peynted hem beside.

*. 10958. *velouettes blew*] Velvets, from the Fr. *velou*, *velouette*. See Du Cange, in v. *Villosa*, *Velluctum*.—I will just add, that as *blew* was the colour of truth, [See C. L. 248.] so *green* belonged to Inconstancy: hence in a *ballade upon an inconstant lady* [among Stowe's additions to Chaucer's Works, p. 551, ed. Urr.] the burthen is—

In hede of blew thus may ye were al grene.

*. 10962. *thise tidifes*] The *tidife* is mentioned as an inconstant bird in *The Leg. of G. W.* ver. 154;

As doth the *tidif* for newefanglenesse.

Skinner supposes it to be the titmouse; but he produces no authority for his supposition, nor have I any to oppose to it.

*. 10963, 4.] Are transposed from the order in which they stand in all the edit. and mss. that I have seen. Some of the best

Thus lete I Canace hire hauk keping:
 I wol no more as now speke of hire ring,
 Til it come eft to purpos for to sain,
 How that this faucon gat hire love again
 Repentant, as the story telleth us,
 By mediation of Camballus,
 The kinges sone, of which that I you told;
 But hennesforth I wol my processe hold
 To speke of adventures and of batailles,
 That yet was never herd so gret mervailles.

First wol I tellen you of a Cambuscan,
 That in his time many a citee wan;
 And after wol I speke of Algarfis,
 How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
 For whom ful oft in gret peril he was,
 Ne had he ben holpen by the hors of bras;
 And after wol I speke of Camballo,
 That fought in listes with the brethren two

msf. however read—*Andpies*—which rather counter transposition. My only excuse for such a liberty must I cannot make any good sense of them in the common text. [v. 10977, 8.] Are also transposed, but upon the authority of msf. A. C. 1, and I believe some others, though I am not satisfied of the certainty of the emendation I have undertaken to take a note of their concurrence. Ed. Ca. 2, agrees with msf. According to the common arrangement old C is to win Theodora to his wife, and we are not told what is the object of Algarfis's adventures.

[v. 10981. *of Camballo's*] Msf. A. reads *Cabalo*: but it is my only reason for suspecting a mistake in this name

THE SQUIERES TALE.

For Canace, er that he might hire winne,
And ther I left I wol again beginne.

clear from the context that the person here intended
(brother but) a lover of Canace;

Who fought in lises with the brethren two
For Canace, or that he might hire winne.

The *brethren two* are obviously the two brethren of
who have been mentioned above, *Algaris* and *Camb*.
msf. *Ask*. 1, 2, it is—*bir brethren two*, which would p
matter out of all doubt. *Camballo* could not fight with
self.—Again, if this *Camballo* be supposed to be the b
of Canace, and to fight in defence of her with some two
thren who might be suitors to her, (according to Spenser
tion) he could not properly be said to *winne* his siller, who
only prevented others from winning her.—The outline th
fore of the unfinished part of this Tale, according to my i
s nearly this; the conclusion of the story of the faucon,

By mediation of *Camballus*,
with the help of the ring, the conquests of *Cambuscan*, t
inning of *Theodora* by *Algaris*, with the assistance of the ho
brass, and the marriage of Canace to some knight, who w
it obliged to fight for her with her two brethren, a meth
courtship very consonant to the spirit of ancient chivalry
v. 10984. *And ther I left*] After this verse, in msf. C. 1, a
ers, is the following note; "Here endeth The Squieres T
meche as Chaucer made." The two lines which in t
and some msf. are made to begin a third part are war
n all the best msf.;

Apollo whirleth up his chare so hie
Til that the god *Mercurius* housle the fle.

certainly have not the least appearance of belonging
lace. I should guess that they were originally scribbled
vacant reader in the blank space which is common
the end of this Tale, and afterwards transcribed as Cha
some copyist of more diligence than sagacity.

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The Wif of Bathes Prologue,
The Wif of Bathes Tale,
The Freres Prologue,
The Freres Tale,
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The Sompnoures Tale,
The Clerkes Prologue,
The Clerkes Tale,
The Marchantes Prologue,
The Marchantes Tale,
The Squieres Prologue,
The Squieres Tale,

From the APOLLO PRESS,
By THE MARTINS,
Oct. 19. 1782.

END OF

THE FIRST EDITION.
POETS OF GREAT BRITAIN
COMPLETE FROM
FAULKNER TO CHURCHILL.



CHAPTER XLIV.
With your grace I left that he came whom
I haileth you, and with away again.

Edinburgh: Printed and Sold by
ed for John Bell British Library Jan. 3^d 1783.

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The Wif of Bathes Prologue,
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From the APOLLO PRESS,
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Oct. 19. 1782.

END OF VOLUME THIRD.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From Urry's Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----

Of ditees and of fonges glade,

The which he---made,

The londe fullfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----

Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,

Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----

That made first to dysstyle and rayne

The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence

Into our tunge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----

My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,

Mirror of fructuous entendement,

Univerfel fadir in science----

This londis verray tresour and richesse----

The firste synder of our fayre langage.

OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,

Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,

In eloquence balme, condit and diall,

Myky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,

Of fresche endite throw Albioun iland braid.

DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,

As in oure tounge flour imperial

That raise in Brittain evir, quha reidis right

Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,

The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:

This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,

Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,

Surmounting every tounge terrestriall

As far as Mavi's morrow dois midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. IV.

EDINBURG:

AT THE *Apollo Press*, BY TUE MARTINE

Anno 1782.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
GEOFFREY CHAUCER.
VOL. IV.

CONTAINING HIS
CANTERBURY TALES, viz.

THE FRANKELINES TALE, THE DOCTOURES TALE, THE PARDONERS TALE, THE SMIFMANNES TALE,		THE PRIORESSE TALE, THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS, THE TALE OF MELIBREUS, THE MONKES TALE, &c. &c. &c.
---	--	--

But astholes certain
 I can right now so thrifty Tale tain,
 But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewdly
 On metres and on riming craftily)
 Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
 Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
 And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
 In a booke, he hath sayd hem in another—
 Who so that wol his large Volume take. TALEs, ser. 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undell'd,
 On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fill'd—
 Old Dan Geoffrey, in whose gentle spright
 The pure well-head of poetry did dwell—
 He whilst he lived was the soveraign head
 Of shepheards all—

SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
 To us discovers day from far;
 His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
 Which our dark nation long involv'd;
 But he descending to the shades
 Darkness again the age invades.

DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
 The language of our fathers—His legends blithe
 He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
 Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
 The fashions and the follies of the world
 With cunning hand portraying—
 Him who in times—

Dark and untaught began with charming verse
 To tame the rudeness of his native land.

AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
 AT THE *Apollo Press*, BY THE MARRINS.
Anno 1782.



THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE FRANKLEIN'S PROLOGUE.

IN faith, Squier, thou hast thee wel-yquit, 10985
And gentilly : I preise wel thy wit,
Quod the Frankelein. Considering thin youthe
So felingly thou spekest, Sire, I aloue the
As to my dome ther is non that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere 10990
If that thou live : God yeve thee goode chance,
And in vertue send thee continuance,
For of thy speking I have gret deintee.
I have a sone, and by the Trinitee 10994
It were me lever than twenty pound worth lond,
Though it right now were fallen in my hond,
He were a man of swiche discretion
As that ye ben. Fie on possession
But if a man be vertuous withal !
I have my sone snibbed and yet shal, 11000
For he to vertue listeth not to entend,
But for to play at dis and to dispend,

*. 10985. *In faith, Squier*] The authorities for giving this Prologue to The Frankelein, and for placing his Tale next to The Squieres, are mss. *A. Ash.* 1, 2, *HA. Bod.* α. γ. In mss. *C.* 1, there is a blank of near two pages at the end of The Squieres Tale, but The Frankelein's Tale follows, beginning at ver. 11066. This arrangement is also supported by ed. *Ct.* 2. For the rest see the *Discourse*, *Œc.* § 25.

And leſe all that he hath, is his uſage;
 And he had lever talken with a page
 Than to commune with any gentil wight 11005
 Ther he might leren gentilleſſe aright.

Straw for your gentilleſſe! quod our Hoſte.
 What? Frankelein, parde, Sire, wel thou woſt
 That eche of you mote tellen at the leſt
 A Tale or two, or breken his beheſt. 11010

That know I wel, Sire, quod the Frankelein:
 I pray you haveth me not in diſdein
 Though I to this man ſpeke a word or two.

Tell on thy Tale withouten wordes mo.

Gladly, Sire Hoſte, quod he, I wol obey 11015
 Unto your will: now herkeneth what I ſey:
 I wol you not contrarien in no wiſe,
 As ſer as that my wittes may ſuffice.
 I pray to God that it may pleaſen you,
 Than wot I wel that it is good ynow. 11020

Thiſe olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes
 Of diſverſe adventures maden layes

†. 11021. *Thiſe olde gentil Bretons*] Of the collection of Britiſh
 lays by Marie ſomething has been ſaid in the *Diſcourſe*, &c.
 p. 24. I will here only quote a few paſſages from that collec-
 tion, to ſhow how exactly Chaucer and the agree in their man-
 ner of ſpeaking of the Armorican bards. The lay of Elidus con-
 cludes thus, ms. *Harl.* 978, fol. 181;

De l'aventure de ces treis
 Je n'en ai Breton curteis
 Ne li lai pur remembrez,
 Ne aucun nel deust pas oublier.

THE FRANKELINES PROLOGUE.

red in hir firſte Breton tonge,
 h layes with hir inſtruments they ſonge,
 les reddē hem for hir plefance, 11075
 on of hem have I in remembrance,

ay of Guigemar thus, fol. 146 ;

De cœſ cœſte, he el aven,
 Fu Guigemar le lai troven,
 Q'hem fait en harpe e en rote,
 Dont est a oir la note.

lay of Chevrefoil begins fol. 171 ;

Aſſez me pleſt, e bien le voil,
 Du lai qe hem nome chevrefoil
 Q'ia verite vos encunt,
 Fur quel il ſu fet e dunt.
 Finſure le me unt cœſte e dit,
 E jeo l'ai trove en eſcrit,
 De Trifſram's de la reïne,
 De ſur amur qui tant ſu ſao,
 Dunt il eurent meinte dolar,
 Puis mururent en un jur.

In one particular Chaucer goes further (as I remember) than Marie, when he ſays that theſe lays were

Rimeyē in hir firſte Breton tonge—

If *rimeyē* be underſtood to mean written in rhyme, but it may very well ſignify only verified. Indeed the editor of the *Dictionnaire de la Langue Bretonne*, by Dom Pelletier, ſeems to doubt whether the Armorican language be capable of any ſort of poetical harmony; “ Nous ne voyons pas que nos Bretons Armoricaïns ayent cultivée la poëſie; et la langue telle qu'ils la parlent, ne paroît pas pouvoir ſe plier à la meſure, à la douceur et à la harmonie des vers.” *Pref.* p. ix. A ſtrange doubt in him, who might have found in the dictionary which he has publiſhed quotations from two Armorican poems, viz. *Les Propheties de Guinglaſſ*, and *La Deſtruction de Jeruſalem*, both in rhyme. See *Arabat. Bagat.* And he himſelf ſpeaks, in the ſame preface, p. viii. of “ La viē de S. Gwenolé, premier Abbé de Landevennec, écrite en vers.” The oldeſt mſ. however now known in the language (according to his account) is that containing *1 Propheties de Guinglaſſ*, written in 1450.

And lese all that he hath, is his usage;
 And he had lever talken with a page
 Than to commune with any gentil wight. 11005
 Ther he might leren gentilleste aright.

Straw for your gentilleste! quod our Hoste.
 What? Frankleyn, parde, Sire, wel thou wost
 That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
 A Tale or two, or breken his behest. 11010

That know I wel, Sire, quod the Frankleyn:
 I pray you haveth me not in disdeyn
 Though I to this man speke a word or twe.

Tell on thy Tale withouten wordes mo.

Gladly, Sire Hoste, quod he, I wol obey 11015
 Unto your will: now herkeneth what I sey:

I wol you not contrarien in no wise,
 As fer as that my wittes may suffice.

I pray to God that it may plesen you,
 Than wot I wel that it is good ynow. 11020

Thise olde gentil Bretons in hir dayes
 Of diverse aventures maden layes

¶ 11021. *Thise olde gentil Bretons*] Of the collection of British lays by Marie something has been said in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 24. I will here only quote a few passages from that collection, to shew how exactly Chaucer and she agree in their manner of speaking of the Armorican barda. The lay of *Elidus* concludes thus, ms. *Harl.* 978, fol. 181;

De l'aventure de ces trois
 Li auntien Bretun curteis
 Firent li lai pur remembrer,
 Qe hum nel deust pas oblier.

Rimeyed in hir firſte Breton tonge,
Which layes with hir instruments they ſonge,
Or elles reddē hem for hir plefance, 11025
And on of hem have I in remembrance,

The lay of Guigemar thus, fol. 146;

De cōt cūte, he oī avēz,
Fu Guigemar le lai trovez,
Q'ham ſait dū harpe q' en reit,
Dont est a oīr la noīe.

The lay of Chevrefoil begins fol. 171;

Aīez me pīez, e bien le voiī,
Du lai qe hūm nūme chevrefoil
Q'la verite vus encunt,
Par quel il fu fet e dunt.
Fīdure lo me unt cause e dīe,
E jee l'ai trove en eīrit,
De Trīſtram's de la reīne,
Dū ſar amur qui tant fu ſpē,
Dunt il eurent meīnte dōlar,
Pele mururent en un jur.

In one particular Chaucer goes further (as I remember) than Marie, when he ſays that theſe lays were

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Which I shal sayn with good-will: as I can.

But, Sires, because I am a barel man,
 At my beginning first I you beseeche
 Have me excused of my rude speche : 1103
 I lerned never rhetorike certein;
 Thing that I speke it mote be bare and plain :
 I slept never on the Mount of Parnaso,
 Ne lerned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
 Colours ne know I non, withouten drede, 1103
 But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
 Or elles swiche armen die with or peinte;
 Colours of rhetorike ben to me queinte;
 My spirit feleth not of swiche matere:
 But if you lust my Tale shul ye here. 1104

THE FRANKLEINES TALE.

In Armorike, that called is Bretaigne,
 Ther was a knight that loved and did his peine
 To serve a lady in his beste wife,
 And many a labour, many a gret emprise,
 He for his lady wrought or she were wonne, 110
 For she was on the fairest under sonne,
 And eke therto comen of so high kinrede
 That wel unnethes durst this knight for drede

The Frankleines Tale] Aurelius, after much labour and content to win the love of Dorigen, another man's wife, in the end, through the good dealing of her and husband, to lose both his labour and cost. The scope of this Tale seemeth to be a contention of courtesy. Urry.

Tell hire his wo, his peine, and his distresse :
 But at the last she for his worthinesse, 11050
 And namely for his meke obeyfance,
 Hath swiche a pitee caught of his penance,
 That prively she fell of his accord
 To take him for hire husbond and hire lord,
 (Of swiche lordshipas men han over hir wives) 11055
 And, for to lede the more in blisse hir lives,
 Of his free will he swore hire as a knight
 That never in all his lif he day ne night
 Ne shulde take upon him no maistrie
 Agains hire will, ne kithe hire jalousie, 11060
 But hire obey, and folwe hire will in al,
 As any lover to his lady shal,
 Save that the name of soverainetee,
 That wold he han for shame of his degree.
 She thonked him, and with ful gret humbleffe 11065
 She saide, Sire, sin of your gentilleffe
 Ye profren me to have so large a reine,
 Ne wolde God never betwix us tweine,
 As in my gilt, were either werre or strif :
 Sire, I wol be your humble trewe wif, 11070
 Have here my trouth, till that myn herte breste.
 Thus ben they both in quiete and in reste.
 For o thing, Sires, fausly dare I seie,
 That frendes everich other must obeie,
 If they wol longe holden compaignie : 11075
 Love wol not be constreined by maistrie :

Whan maistris cometh the god of Love then

Beteth his winges, and, fawwel, he is gon.

Love is a thing as any spirit free.

Women of kind desiren libertee, 114

And not to be constrained as a thral;

And so des men, if sothly I say shal.

Loke, who that is most patient in love

He is at his advantage all above.

Patience is an high vertue certain, 115

For it venquisheth, as thise clerkes sain,

Things that rigour never shulde atteine.

For every word men may not chide or pleine.

Lerneth to suffren, or, so mote I gon,

Ye shul it lerne whether ye wol or non; 116

For in this world certain no wight ther is

That he ne doeth or sayth somtime amis.

For, siknesse, or constellacion,

Win, wo, or changing of complexion,

Causeth ful oft to don amis or speken : 117

On every wrong a man may not be wroken.

After the time must be temperance

To every wight that can of governance :

And therefore hath this worthy wise knight

(To liven in ese) suffrance hire behight, 118

And she to him ful wisly gan to swere

That never shuld ther be defaute in here.

Here may men seen an humble wife accord;

Thus hath she take hire servant and hire lord,

t in love and lord in marriage. IIIIC5
 was he both in lordship and servage ?
 eif may, but in lordship al above,
 hath both his lady and his love ;
 y certes, and his wif also,
 hich that law of love accordeth to. IIIIIO
 han he was in this prosperitee
 with his wif he goth to his contrée,
 fro Penmark, ther his dwelling was,
 as he liveth in blisse and in soles.
 3 coude tell, but he had wedded be, IIII15
 ye, the esc, and the prosperitee,
 3 betwix an husbond and his wif ?
 and more lasteth this blisful lif,
 t this knight, of which I spake of thus,
 f Cairrud was cleped Arviragus, IIII20
 him to gon and dwelle a yere or twaine
 felond, that cleped was eke Bretagne,

113. *Not fer fro Penmark*] The best mss. have blun-
 this name; they write it *Pedmark*; but mss. *Bod. a. c.*
Ca. 2, have it right—*Penmark*. The later editt. have
 it ridiculously enough into *Denmark*.—*Penmark* is
 the maps upon the western coast of Bretagne, between
 Port L'Orient. Walsingham mentions a descent of the
 in 1403, *apud Penarch*, (r. *Penmarch*) p. 369. See *Lo-
 z. de Bres.* t. 1. p. 503. In the same history *de Penmarc*
 very frequently as a family name. The etymology of
 l, from *pen* (*caput, mons*) and *mark* (*limes, regio*) is
 y British.

120. *Cairrud*] This word is also of British original, sig-
 he red city, as *cair guent* in this island signified the
 y. *Arviragus* is a known British name from the time

To ſeke in armes worſhip and honour,
 (For all his luſt he ſet in ſwiche labour)
 And dwelte ther two yere: the booke ſaith thus. IIII25

Now wol I ſtint of this Arviragus,
 And ſpeke I wol of Dorigene his wif,
 That loveth hire huſbond as hire hertes lif.
 For his abſence wepeth ſhe and ſiketh,
 As don thiſe noble wives whan hem liketh: IIII30
 She morneth, waketh, waileth, faſteth, pleineth:
 Deſir of his preſence hire ſo diſtraineth
 That all this wide world ſhe ſet at nought.
 Hire frendes, which that knew hire hevvy thought,
 Comforten hire in all that ever they may; IIII35
 They prechen hire, they telle hire night and day
 That cauſeles ſhe ſleth hireſelf, alas!
 And every comfort poſſible in this caſ
 They don to hire with all hir beſineſſe,
 Al for to make hire leve hire hevvinelle. IIII40

By proceſſe, as ye known everich on,
 Men mowe ſo longe graven in a ſton
 Til ſom figure therin emprented be:
 So long han they comforted hire til ſhe
 Received hath, by hope and by reſon, IIII45
 The emprenting of hir conſolation,
 Thurgh which hire grete ſorwe gan aſſuage:
 She may not alway duren in ſwiche rage.

¶. IIII27 *Dorigene*] *Droguen* or *Dorguen* was the name of the wife of Alain I. *Lobineau*, t. p. 70. See alſo the index to t. ii.

And the Arviragus, in all this care,
 Hath sent his lettres home of his welfare, III50
 And that he wol come hastily again,
 Or elles had this forwe hire herte slain.

Hire frendes saw hire forwe gan to flake,
 And preiden hire on knees, for Goddes sake,
 To come and rousen hir compaignie, III55
 Away to driven hire darke fantasie:
 And, finally, she granted that request,
 For wel she saw that it was for the best.

Now stood hire castel faste by the see,
 And often with hire frendes walked she, III60
 Hire to disporten on the bank an hie,
 Wheras she many a ship and barge sie
 Sailing hir cours whar as hem list to go:
 But than was that a parcel of hire wo,
 For to hireself ful oft, alas! said she, III65
 Is ther no ship, of so many as I see,
 Wol bringen home my lord? than were my herte
 Al warished of his bitter peines smerte.

Another time wold she sit and thinke,
 And cast hire eyen downward fro the brinke; III70
 But whan she saw the grisly rockes blake,
 For veray fere so wold hire herte quake
 That on hire feet she might hire not sustene:
 Than wold she sit adoun upon the grene,
 And pitoussly into the see behold, III75
 And say right thus, with careful likes cold:

I tene God! that thurgh thy purveance
 Ledest this world by certain governance,
 In idel, as men fain, ye nothing make :
 But, Lord! thise grisly fendly rockes blake, 11180
 That semen rather a foule confusoun
 Of werk than any faire creation
 Of swiche a parfit wise God and stable,
 Why han ye wrought this werk unresonable?
 For by this werk north, south, newest, ne est, 11185
 'T her n'is yfouled man, ne brid, ne best :
 It doth no good to my wit, but anoyeth.
 See ye not, Lord! how mankind it destroyeth?
 An hundred thousand bodies of mankind
 I han rockes slain, al be they not in mind, 11190
 Which mankind is so faire part of thy werk,
 Thou madest it like to thyn owen merk.
 Til an, semeth it, ye had a gret chertee
 Toward mankind; but how than may it be
 That ye swiche menes make it to destroyen, 11195
 Which menes don no good, but ever anoyen?
 I wote wel clerkes wol fain as hem lest,
 By arguments, that all is for the best,
 That, helpe can the causes nought yknow;
 But thiike God that made the wind to blow 11200
 As heple my lord; this is my conclusion;
 To clerkes lete I all disputisoun :
 But welde God that all thise rockes blake
 Were fonken into helle for his sake :

These rocks flee in hets for the fire. II 205
 Thus wold his say with many a piteous tere.
 Hire frendes saw that it was no disport
 To romen by the see, but discomfort,
 And shapen hem for to plaie somwher elles.
 They leden hire by rivers and by welles, II 210
 And eke in other places delitable;
 They dancen, and they play at ches and tables.
 So on a day, right in the morwe tide,
 Unto a gardin that was ther beside,
 In which that they had made hir ordinance II 215
 Of vitaille and of other purveance,
 They gon and plaie hem all the longe day;
 And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
 Which May had peynted with his softe shoures
 This garden ful of leves and of floures: II 220
 And craft of mannes hond so curiously
 Arrayed had this gardin trewely,
 That never was ther gardin of swiche pris,
 But if it were the veray Paradis.
 The odour of floures and the freshe sight II 225
 Wold han ymaked any herte light
 That ever was born, but if to gret sikenesse
 Or to gret forwe held it in distresse,
 So ful it was of beautee and plesance.
 And after dinner gonnen they to dance II 230
 And sing also, sauf Dorigene alone,
 Which made alway hire complaint and hire mone,

For she ne saw him on the dance go
 That was hire husband and hire love also:
 But natheles she must a time abide, 11235
 And with good hope let hire sorwe fide.

Upon this dance, amonges other men,
 Danced a squier before Dorigen
 That fresher was and jolier of array,
 As to my dome, than is the month of May. 11240
 He singeth, danceth, passing any man
 That is or was sin that the world began;
 Therwith he was, if men shuld him discriue,
 On of the best faring men on live;
 Yong, strong, and vertuous, and riche, and wise,
 And wel beloved, and holden in gret prife. 11246
 And, shortly, if the soth I tellen shal,
 Unweting of this Dorigene at al,
 This lusty squier, servant to Venus,
 Which that ycleped was Aurelius, 11250
 Had loved hire best of any creature
 Two yere and more, as was his aventure,
 But never dorst he tell hire his grevance:
 Withouten cup he dranke all his penance.

¶ 11250. *Aurelius*] This name, though of Roman original, was common, we may presume, among the Britons. One of the princes mentioned by Gildas was called Aurelius Conanus; another British king is named Aurelius Ambrosius by Geoffrey of Monmouth. It may be remarked of this last author, that although he has not paid the least regard to truth in his narration of facts he has been very attentive to probability in his names both of persons and places.

He was dispaised; nothing dorst he say, 11255

Sauf in his soules for what wold he wray

His wo, as in a general complaining;

He said he loved and was beloved nothing.

Of swiche matere made he many layes,

Songes, complaintes, roundels, virelayes; 11260

How that he dorste not his forwe telle,

But languisheth as doth a Furie in helle;

And die he must, he said, as did Ecco

For Narcissus, that dorst not tell hire wo.

In other maner than ye here me say 11265

Ne dorst he not to hire his wo bewray,

Sauf that paraventure somtime at dances,

'Ther yonge folk kepen hir observances,

It may wel be he loked on hire face

In swiche a wise as man that axeth grace; 11270

But nothing wise she of his entent.

Natheles it happed or they thennes went,

Becausethat he was hire neighebour,

And was a man of worship and honour,

And had yknowen him of time yore, 11275

They fell in speche, and forth ay more and more

Unto his purpos drow Aurelius,

And whan he saw his time he saide thus:

* 11262. as doth a Furie in helle] It is a *fre*, in mss. C. 1, A.B. 1, 2, H.A. which perhaps ought to have been followed, though I cannot say that I well understand either of the readings. *Fury* and *Fyrr* have been confounded before, ver. 2636.

Madame, quod he, by God that this world made,
 So that I wist it might your herte glade, 11280
 I wold that day that your Arviragus
 Went over see that I Aurelius
 Had went ther I shuld never come again,
 For wel I wot my service is in vain;
 My guerdon n'is but bressing of min herte. 11285
 Madame, rueth upon my peines smerte,
 For with a word ye may me sleen or save.
 Here at your feet God wold that I were grave.
 I ne have as now no leifer more to sey:
 Have mercy, swete! or ye wol do me dey. 11290

She gan to loke upon Aurelius:
 Is this your will, (quod she) and say ye thus?
 Never erst (quod she) ne wist I what ye ment,
 But now, Aurelie, I know your entent.
 By thilke God that yaf me soule and lif - 11295
 Ne shal I never ben an untrewé wif
 In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit;
 I wol ben his to whom that I am knit:
 Take this for final answer as of me.
 But after that in play thus saide she: 11300

Aurelie, (quod she) by high God above
 Yet wol I granten you to ben your love,
 (Sin I you see so pitouffly complaine.)
 Loke, what day that endelong Bretaigne
 Ye remue all the rockes ston by ston, 11305
 That they ne letten ship ne bote to gon;

I say, when he has made the cofe so dene
 Of rockes that ther is no fien yfene,
 Than wol I love you best of any man;
 Have here my mouth, in all that ever I can, 11310
 For wel I wote that it shal never betide.
 Let swiche folie out of your herte glide:
 What deintee shuld a man have in his lif
 For to go love another mannes wif
 That hath his body when that ever him liketh?

Aurelius ful often fore fiketh: 11316

Is ther non other grace in you? quod he.

No, by that Lord, quod she, that maketh me.
 Wp was Aurelie when that he this herd;
 And with a sorwefal herte he thus answerd: 11320

Madame, quod he, this were impossible;
 Than mooste I die of soden derh horrible.
 And with that word he turned him anon.

Tho come hire other frendes many on,
 And in the alleyes romed up and doun, 11325
 And nothing wist of this conclusoun,
 But sodenly begonnen revel newe,
 Til that the brighte founne had lost his hewe,
 For the orizont had rest the founne his light,
 (This is as much to sayn as it was night) 11330
 And home they gon in mirthe and in solas,
 Sauþ only wrecche Aurelius, alas!

¶ 11317. *Is ther non oþer grace*] I have inserted these two lines in this place upon the authority of ms. A. supported by ms. E. Bod. 9. They have usually been placed after ver. 11310.

He to his hous is gon with sorweful herts;
 He saith he may not from his deth asserte:
 Him semeth that he felt his herte cold. II335
 Up to the heven his hondes gan he hold,
 And on his knees bare he set him down,
 And in his raving said his orifoun.
 For veray wo out of his wit he braide;
 He n'iste what he spake, but thus he saide; II340
 With pitous herte his plaint hath he begonne
 Unto the goddes, and first unto the Sonne.
 He said, Apollo! god and governour
 Of every plante, herbe, tree, and flour,
 That yevest after thy declination II345
 To eche of hem his time and his seson,
 As that thin herbergh changeth low and hie,
 Lord Phebus! cast thy merciable cie
 On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lorne:
 Lo, Lord! my lady hath my deth yfworne II350
 Withouten gilt, but thy benignitee
 Upon my dedly herte have som pitee:
 For wel I wot, Lord Phebus, if you lest,
 Ye may me helpen sauf my lady best.
 Now voucheth sauf that I may you devise II355
 How that I may be holpe, and in what wise.
 Your blisful suster, Lucina the shene,
 That of the see is chief goddesse and queene,
 Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
 Yet emperice aboven him is she: II360

Ye knowe wel, Lord, that right as hire desire
Is to be quicked and lighted of your fire,
For which she solweth you ful besily,
Right so the see desireth naturelly
To solwen hire, as she that is goddesse II 365
Both in the see and rivers more and less :
Wherefore, Lord Phebus ! this is my request,
Do this miracle, or do min. herte brest,
That now next at this opposition,
Which in the signe shal be of the Leon, II 370
As preyeth hire so gret a flood to bring,
That five fadome at the lest it overspring
The highest rock in Armorike Bretaigne,
And let this flood endure yeres twaine ;
Than certes to my lady may I say, II 375
Holdeth your hest, the rockes ben away.
Lord Phebus ! this miracle doth for me,
Prey hire she go no faster cours than ye ;
I say this, preyeth your suster that she go
No faster cours than ye thise yeres two, II 380
Than shal she ben even at ful alway,
And spring-flood lasten bothe night and day.
And but she vouchesauf in swiche manere
To graunten me my soveraine lady dere,
Prey hire to sinken every rock adoun II 385
Into hire owen derke regioun
Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth in,
Or nevermo shal I my lady win.

Thy temple in Delphos wol I haue;
Lord Phoebus! see the tears on my cheeks,
And on my point haue sum compassion.
And with that word in sorwe he fell adon,
And longe time he lay forth in a trance.
His brother, which that knew of his purpose,
Up caught him, and to bed he bath him brought
Discreed in this turment and this thought.
Let I this woful creature lie,
Cheste he for me whether he wol live or die.

Arviragus with luste and gret honour
(As he than was of cheualrie the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men:
O, blisful art thou now than Dorigen!
That hast thy lusty husband in thin armes,
The freeste knight, the worthy man of armes,
That loveth thee as his owen hertes lif.
Nothing lik him to be imaginatif
If any wight had spake while he was onte
To hire of love; he had of that no doute:
He not entendeth to no swiche matere,
But danceth, julleth, and maketh mery chere
And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dwell,
And of the like Aurelius wol I tell.

In langour and in turment furious
Two yere and more lay wretched Aurelius
Er any foot on erthe he mighte gon;

Ne comfort in this time ne had he non

other, which that was a clerk :

In this we and all this werk ;

her creature of kin.

she darste no word fain : 11420

so he bare it more drede

þi Pamphilus þe countre .

hole withen drede for a toun.

To day was the 30th of June,

so we that of a creature 11425

reuered the lord.

at that tyme the lord was in the

parke with his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his 11430

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

deer and his houndes and his

Thy temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke.
 Lord Phebus! see the teres on my cheke, 11390
 And on my peine have som compassioun.
 And with that word in sorwe he fell adoun,
 And longe time he lay forth in a trance.
 His brother, which that knew of his penance,
 Up caught him, and to bed he hath him brought.
 Dispeired in this turment and this thought 11396
 Let this woful creature lie,
 Chese he for me whether he wol live or die.

Arviragus with hele and gret honour
 (As he that was of chevalrie the flour) 11400
 Is comen home, and other worthy men :
 O, blisful art thou now thou Dorigen!
 That hast thy lusty husband in thin armes,
 The trefse knight, the worthy man of armes,
 That loveth thee as his owen hertes lif. 11405
 Nothing litt him to be imaginatif
 If any wight had spoke while he was oute
 To hire of love: he had of that no doute :
 He not entendeth to no swiche matere,
 But danceth, julleth, and maketh mery chere. 11410
 And thus in joye and blisse I let hem dwell,
 And of the sike Aurelius wel I tell.

In langour and in turnment furious
 Two yere and more lay wrecched Aurelius
 For any foot on erthe he mighte gon; 11415
 No comfort in this time ne had he non

Sauf of his brother, which that was a clerk :
 He knew of all this wo and all this werk ;
 For to non other creature certain .
 Of this matere he dorste no word fain : 11420
 Under his brest he bare it more secree
 Than ever did Pamphilus for Galathee.
 His brest was hole withouten for to seen,
 But in his herte ay was the arwe-kene,
 And wel ye knowe that of a fursanure 11425
 In surgerie is perilous the cure,
 But men might touch the arwe or come therby.
 His brother wepeth and wailleth prively,
 Til at the last him fell in remembrance
 That while he was at Orleunce in France, 11430
 As yonge clerkes that ben likerous
 To reden artes that ben curious

*. 11422. *Pamphilus for Galathee*] Mr. Urry, misled by his classical learning, has altered this most licentiously—

Than *Polypbemus* did for *Galathee*.

But the allusion is plainly to the first lines of a Latin poem which was very popular in the time of Chaucer, in which one *Pamphilus* gives a history of his amour with *Galatea*.--The poem begins thus, ms. *Cotton, Titus. A. XX.* ;

Liber Pamphili.

Vulneror et clausum porto sub pectore telum,
 Crescit et assidue plaga dolorque mihi.
 Et ferientis adhuc non audeo dicere nomen;
 Nec finet aspectus plaga videre suos.

This poem by the name of *Pamphilus* is quoted in our Author's *Meisbeus*. It is extant in ms. in many libraries, and it has also been printed more than once. *Leyser. Hist. Poet. Medii ævi*, p. 2071, (1171.) *Catal. Gaignat. n.* 2233, 2234.

Seken in every halke and every herne
 Particuler sciences for to lerne,
 He him remembred that upon a day
 At Orleauce in studie a book he fay
 Of magike naturel, which his felaw
 That was that time a bachelor of law,
 Al were he ther to lerne another craft
 Had prively upon his desk ylast;
 Which book spake moche of operation
 Touching the eight-and-twenty man
 That longen to the mone, and fwiche
 As in our dayes n'is not worth a flie;
 For holy cherches feith, in our beleve,
 Ne suffreth non illusion us to greve.
 And whan this book was in his remer
 Anon for joye his herte gan to dance,
 And to himself he saied prively,
 My brother shal be warished hastily;
 For I am siker that ther be sciences
 By which men maken divers apparenc
 Swiche as thise subtil tregetoures play
 For oft at festes have I wel herd say

♪. 11453. *tregetoures*] The profession of a
 gler was anciently very comprehensive, as a
 passage of the *Breviari d'Amors*. [See the *Dise*

Altrelli peccan li joglar,
 Que sabon cantar e balar,
 E sabon tocar estruments,
 O sabon encantar las gens,
 O far antra joglayria—

In the time of Chaucer the persons who exerci
 sioned branches of the art were called gené

That tregetoures, within an halle large, II455
Have made come in a water and a barge,

the name of Jogelour was, in a manner, appropriated to those who by sleight of hand and machines produced such illusions of the senses as are usually supposed to be effected by enchantment. [See above, ver. 7049.] This species of jogelour is here called a *tregetour*. They are joined together in company with magicians, *ll.* of F. iii. 169;

Ther saw I playing *jogelours*,
Magiciens and *tregetours*,
And Philonestes, charmeresses—
And clerkes eke, which kunne wel
All this *magike naturel*.—

See also the following ver. 187—191. —If we compare the feats of the *tregetours*, as described in this passage, with those which are afterwards performed by the *clerkes magike* for the entertainment of his guests, [ver. 11501—11519,] we shall find them very similar, and they may both be illustrated by the following account which Sir John Mandeville has given of the exhibitions before the Grete Chan; “And than comen *jogelours*” and *enchantours*, that don many marvaylles; for they maken to come in the ayr the sone and the mone, be seminge to every mannes sight: and after they maken the nyght so derk that no man may see no thing: and afre they maken the day to come ayen fair and plesant with bright sonne to every mannes sight: and than they bringen in daunces of the fairest damyelles of the world and richest arrayed: and afre they maken to comen in other damyelles, bringinge coupe of gold fulle of mylk of dyverse bestes, and yeven drynke to lordes and to ladyes: and than they make knyghtes to jousten in armes fulle lustyly; and they rennen togidre at randoun, and they frusschen togidre fulle fiercely, and they breken here speres so rudely that the nonchouns fien in spores and pees alle aboute the halle: and than they make to come in hunting for the hert and for the boor, with houndes renning with open mouth. And many other thinges they don be craft of hir enchauntementes, that it is marveyle for to see. And suche playes of deiport they make til the taking

And in the halle rowen up and down;
Somtime hath semed come a grim leoun,

"up of the boordes." *Mand. Trav.* p. 285, 6. See also p. 261;
"And wher it be by craft or by aygromancye I wot nere."—
The Glossary derives *tregetour* from the verb. Lat. *tricare*; but
the derivatives of that family are *tricheur*, *tricherie*, *trick*, &c.
Nor can I find the word *tregetour* in any language but our own.
It seems clearly to be formed from *treget*, which is frequently
used by Chaucer for *deceit*, *imposture*, *R. R.* 6267, 6312, 6825;
and so is *tregetry*, *ibid.* 6374, 6382. From whence *treget* itself
may have been derived is more difficult to say; but I observe
that *trebuchet* (the French name for a military engine) is called
by Chaucer *trepeget*, *R. R.* 6279, and by Knighton, 2672, *trepe-
get*; and that this same word *trebuchet*, in French, signified
also a machine for catching birds. *Du Cange*, in v. *Treppeget*;
"Hinc appellatio manfit apud nos instrumentis, aut machinu-
lis, suspensis et lapsilibus, ad captandas aviculas. Has enim
"etiamnum *trebuchets* appellamus." *Muratori*, in his *Antiq.
Med. Æ.* Diss. xxvi. p. 473, informs us that *trabocchetto* or
trabocchetto, in Italian, (which he explains to be the same as
trebusbet in French) signified also another instrument of fraud,
which he describes thus; "Sæculis Italicæ turbatissimis—in usu
"fuere teterrima insidiarum loca, id est, in cubiculis pavimen-
"tum perforatum, ac ligneâ tabulâ (*Ribalta* appellabant) ita
"caute coopertum, ut qui improvide alteram tabulæ partem
"pedibus premeret, cedente ipsâ in ima rueret." This was
clearly a species of trapdoor.—The reader will judge whe-
ther the *tregetour* may not possibly have been so called from
his frequent use of these insidious machines in his operations.
—That a great deal of machinery was requisite to produce
the appearances or illusions enumerated by Chaucer in this pas-
sage is very certain; but not long after the art of a *tregetour*
seems to have been reduced to that of a modern juggler, mere
sight of hand. In Lydgate's translation of *The Dance of Ma-
cchre*, ms. *Harl.* 116, he has introduced a *tregetour* speaking
thus;

What may availle mankynde [f. *magike*] naturale,
Or any craft shewed by apparence,
Or counseil of Serres above celestiale,
Or of heven all the influence,

an conclude I thus: if that I might
 nce fom olde felaw shal 11 of 5
 thife mones n additions in mure,
 magike naturel above,
 wel make my brother have the best
 an apparence a clerke may make,
 es fight, that all the rases of the
 gne were yvoided evermore,
 pes by the brinke comen and
 viche forme endure a litle more
 re my brother warlied a litle more
 at the nedes holden and a litle more
 he shal shame nire at the best
 shuld I make a litle more a litle more
 brothers bed he comen a litle more

And swiche comfort he gaf him for to gon
 To Orleunce that he up stert anon, 11480
 And on his way forthward than is he fare,
 In hope for to ben lifed of his care.

Whan they were come almost to that citez,
 But if it were a two furlong or three,
 A yonge clerk roming by himself they mette, 11485
 Which that in Latine thriftily hem grette;
 And after that he sayd a wonder thing;
 I know, quod he, the cause of your coming;
 And or they forther any foote went
 He told hem all that was in hir entent, 11490

This Breton clerk him axed of felawes
 The which he had yknown in olde dawes,
 And he answered him that they dede were,
 For which he wept ful often many a tere.

Doun of his hors Aurelius light anon, 11495
 And forth with this magicien is gon
 Home to his hous, and made hem wel at ese:
 Hem lacked no vitaille that might hem plesse.
 So wel arraied hous as ther was on
 Aurelius in his lif saw never non. 11500

He shewed him, or they went to soupere,
 Forestes, parkes, ful of wilde dere:
 Ther saw he hartes with hir hornes hie,
 The gretest that were ever seen with eie:
 He saw of hem an hundred slain with houndes,
 And som with arwes blede of bitter woundes: 11506

He saw, when voided were the wilde dere,
 Thise fauconers upon a faire rivere
 That with hir haukes han the heron slain.

Tho saw he knightes justen in a plain : 115 10
 And after this he did him swiche plesance,
 That he him shewed his lady on a dance,
 On which himselfen danced, as him thought.
 And whan this maister, that this magike wrought,
 Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes two, 115 15
 And farewel, al the revel is ago!
 And yet remued they never out of the hous,
 While they saw all thise fightes merveillous,
 But in his studie, ther his bookes be,
 They saten still, and no wight but they three. 115 20

To him this maister called his squier,
 And sayd him thus, May we go to souper ?
 Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
 Sin I you hade our souper for to make,
 Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me 115 25
 Into my studie ther my bookes be.

Sire, quod this squier, whan it liketh you,
 It is al redy, though ye wol right now.

Go we than soupe, quod he, as for the best ;
 Thise amorous folk somtime moste han rest. 115 30

At after souper fell they in trettee
 What summe shuld this maisters guerdon be
 To remue all the rockes of Bretaigne,
 And eke from Gerounde to the mouth of Saine.

He made it strange, and swore, so God him save,
 Less than a thousand pound he wold not have,
 Ne gladly for that summe he wold not gon. 11537

Aurelius with blisful herte anon

Answered thus; Fie on a thousand pound!
 This wide world, which that men sayn is round,
 I wold it yeve, if I were lord of it. 11541

This bargaine is ful drive, for we ben knit.

Ye shul be paied trewely, by my trouth;

But loketh, for non negligence or slouth

Ye tarie us here no longer than to morwe, 11545

Nay, quod this clerk, have here my faith to borwe.

To bed is gon Aurelius whan him lest,
 And wel nigh all that night he had his rest,
 What for his labour and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte of penance had a liffe. 11550

Upon the morwe whan that it was day

To Bretaigne token they the righte way,

Aurelie, and this magicien him beside,

And ben descended ther they wold abide :

And this was, as the bookes me remember, 11555

The colde frosty seson of December.

Phebus waxe old and hewed like Laton,

That in his hote declination

Shone as the burned gold with stremes bright;

But now in Capricorne adoun he light, 11560

Wher as he shone ful pale, I dare wel sain.

The bitter froste with the fleet and rain

Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd;
 Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
 And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine; 11565
 Beforn him stant braune of the tusked swine,
 And Nowel crieth every lusty man.

Aurelius in all that ever he can
 Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
 And praieth him to don his diligence 11570
 To bringen him out of his peines smerte,
 Or with a swerd that he wold slit his herte.

This sotil clerk swiche routh hath on this man,
 That night and day he spedeth him that he can
 To wait a time of his conclusion; 11575
 This is to sayn, to make illusion,
 By swiche an apparence or joglerie,
 (I can no termes of astrologie)
 That she and every wight shuld wene and say
 That of Bretaigne the rockes were away, 11580
 Or elles they were sonken under ground.
 So at the last he hath his time yfound
 To make his japes and his wretchednesse
 Of swiche a superstitious cursednesse.

v. 11567. *And Nowel crieth*] *Noël*, in French, is derived from *natalis*, and signified originally a cry of joy at Christmas, "Le jour natal de notre Seigneur." *Menage*, in v. *Nouvel*. It was afterwards the usual cry of the people upon all occasions of joy and festivity. *Hist. de Charles VII. par Chartier*, p. 3, at the proclamation of H. VI. "Fut crié sur la fosse de son pere à haute voix, Vive le Roy Henry, Roy de France et d'Angleterre;" and "Avec cela fut crié Noël, des assistans, confortans ledits Anglois."

His tables Toletanes forth he brought, 11585
 Ful wel corrected, that ther lacked nought,
 Nother his collect ne his expans yeres,
 Nother his rotes ne his other geres,
 As ben his centres and his argumentes,
 And his proportionel convenientes, 11590
 For his equations in every thing:
 And by his eighte speres in his werking
 He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
 Fro the hed of thilke fix Aries above
 That in the ninthe spere considered is: 11595
 Ful sotilly he calculated all this.
 Whan he had found his firste mansion
 He knew the remenant by proportion,
 And knew the rising of his mone wel,
 And in whos face, and terme, and every del; 11600
 And knew ful wel the mones mansion
 Accordant to his operation;
 And knew also his other observances,
 For swiche illusions and swiche meschances
 As Hethen folk used in thilke daies; 11605
 For which no lenger maketh he delaies,

ψ. 11585. *His tables Toletanes*] The astronomical tables composed by order of Alphonso X. King of Castile, about the middle of the 13th century, were called sometimes *Tabule Toletane*, from their being adapted to the city of Toledo. There is a very elegant copy of them in ms. *Harl.* 3647. I am not sufficiently skilled in the ancient astronomy to add any thing to the explanation of the following technical terms (drawn chiefly from those tables) which has been given in the addit. to *Gloss. Ditt.* v. *Expans yeres*.

ough his magike, for a day or tway,
 d all the rockes were away.
 lius, which that despeired is
 er he shal han his love or fare amis, 11610
 th night and day on this miracle;
 han he knew that ther was non obstacle,
 oided were thise rockes everich on,
 o his maisters feet he fell anon,
 yd, I, woful wretch Aurelius, 11615
 e you, my lord, and lady min Venus,
 e han holpen fro my cares cold.
 the temple his way forth hath he hold,
 he knew he shuld his lady see;
 han he saw his time anon right he 11620
 redful herte and with ful humble chere
 hath his soveraine lady dere.
 rightful Lady, quod this woful man,
 I most drede and love as I best can,
 thest were of all this world displesse, 11625
 t that I for you have swiche disese
 must die here at your foot anon,
 t wold I tell how me is wo begon;
 tes other must I die or plaine;
 ne gilteles for veray peine : 11630
 my deth though that ye han no routh
 y you or that you breke your trouth :
 eth you, for thilke God above,
 ne fle, because that I you love :

For, Madame, wel ye wote what ye have hight;
 Not that I chalenge any thing of right 11636
 Of you my soveraine Lady, but of grace;
 But in a gardin yond, in swiché a place,
 Ye wote right wel what ye behighten me,
 And in myn hond your trouthe plighten ye 11640
 To love me best : God wote ye saied so,
 Although that I unworthy be therto.
 Madame, I speke it for the honour of you,
 More than to save my hertes lif right now,
 I have don so as ye commanded me, 11645
 And if ye vouchesauf ye may go see.
 Doth as you list, have your behest in mind,
 For quick or ded right ther ye shul me find.
 In you lith all to do me live or dey,
 But wel I wote the rockes ben away. 11650
 He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood;
 In all hire face n'as o drope of blood :
 She wened never han come in swiche a trappe.
 Alas! quod she, that ever this should happe!
 For wend I never by possibillitee 11655
 That swiche a monstre or mervaille might be :
 It is again the processe of Nature.
 And home she goth a forweful creature;
 For veray fere unnethes may she go.
 She wepeth, waileth, all a day or two, 11660
 And swouneth that it routhe was to see,
 But why it was to no wight tolde she,

For out of town was gon Arrivagus;
 But to hireself she spake, and saied thus,
 With face pale, and with ful sory chere, 11665
 In hire complaint, as ye shal after here.

- Alas! quod she, on thee, Fortune, I plain,
 That unaware hast me wrapped in thy chain,
 Fro which to escapen wote I no soccour
 Sauf only deth or elles dishonour: 11670

On of thise two behoveth me to chese.
 But natheles, yet had I lever lese
 My lif than of my body have a shame,
 Or know myselven false, or lese my name :
 And with my deth I may be quit ywis; 11675
 Hath ther not many a noble wif or this,
 And many a maid, yslaine hireself, alas!
 Rather than with hire body don trespas?
 Yes certes; lo, thise stortes bere witnesse.

Whan thirty tyrants ful of cursednesse 11680
 Had slain Phidon in Athens at the fest,
 They commanded his doughtren for to arrest
 And bringen hem beforne hem in despit
 Al naked, to fulfill hir foule delit;
 And in hir fadres blood they made hem dance 11685
 Upon the pavement, God yewe hem meschance!
 For which thise woful maidens, ful of drede,
 Rather than they wold lese hir maidenhede,
 They prively ben stert into a welle,
 And dreint hemselven, as the bookes telle. 11690

¶ 11679. *thise stortes bere witnesse*] They are all taken from
Hieronymus contra Jovinianum, l. i. c. 39.

They of Messene let enquire and seke
 Of Lacedomie fifty maidens eke
 On which they wolden don hir lecherie;
 But ther was non of all that compaignie
 That she n'as flaine, and with a glad entent 11695
 Chees rather for to dien than assent
 To ben oppressed of hire maidenhede.
 Why shuld I than to dien ben in drede?

Lo eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
 That loved a maid hight Stimphalides, 11700
 Whan that hire father flaine was on a night,
 Unto Diances temple goth she right,
 And hente the image in hire handes two,
 Fro which image wold she never go;
 No wight her handes might of it arrace 11705
 Til she was flaine right in the selve place.

Now sin that maidens hadden swiche despit
 To be defouled with mannes foule delit,
 Wel ought a wif rather hireselven fle
 Than be defouled, as it thinketh me. 11710

What shal I sayn of Hasdrubales wif,
 That at Cartage beraft hireself hire lif?
 For whan she saw that Romans wan the toun
 She toke hire children all, and skipt adoun
 Into the fire, and chees rather to die 11715
 Than any Romain did hire vilanie.

Hath not Lucrece yflaine hireself, alas!
 At Rome, whan that she oppressed was

Of Tarquint? for hire thought it was a shame
To liven whan she hadde lost hire name. II 720

The seven maidens of Milese also
Haa slaine hemself, for veray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gask hem shuld oppresse.

Mo than a thousand floris, as I gessie,
Coude I now tell as touching this matere. II 725

Whan Abradate was slain, his wif so dere
Hireselven flow, and let hire blood to glide
In Abradates woundes depe and wide,
And sayd, My body at the lestie way
Ther shal no wight defoulen if I may. II 730

What shuld I me ensamples hereof sain?
Sin that so many han hemselven slain,
Wel rather than they wold defouled be,
I wol conclude that it is bet for me
To fle myself than be defouled thus: II 735
I wol be trewe unto Arviragus,
Or elles fle myself in some manere,
As did Demotiones doughter dere,
Because she wolde not defouled be.

O Sedasus! it is ful gret pitee II 740
To reden how thy doughtren died, alas!
That flowe hemselven for swiche maner cas.

As gret a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban maiden that for Nichanore
Hireselven flow right for swiche manere wo. II 745
Another Theban mayden did right so,

For on of Macedoine had hire oppressed;
She with hire deth hire maidenhead redressed.

What shal I saie of Nicerates wil,
That for swiche cas beaft hireself hire lif? 11750

How trewe was eke to Alcibiades
His love, that for to dien rather chees
Than for to suffre his body unbaried be?

Lo, which a wif was Alceste she? (quod she)
What sayth Homere of good Penelope? 11755
All Grece kneweth of hire chastitee.

Parde of Laodomia is written thus,
That whan at Troye was slain Prothecilans
No lenger wolde she live after his day.

The same of noble Portia tell I may; 11760
Withouten Brutus coude she not live,
To whom she had all hol hire herte yeve.

The parfit wifhood of Artemisie
Honoured is thurghout all Barbarie.

O Teuta quene! thy wifly chastitee 11765
To alle wives may a mirroure be.

Thus plained Dorigene a day or twey,
Purposing ever that she wolde dey;
But natheles upon the thridde night
Home came Arviragus, the worthy knight, 11770

†. 11766. *To alle wives*] After this verse the two following
are found in several mss.;

The same thing I say of Bilis,
Of Rhodogone and of Valeria—

but as they are wanting in mss. *A. C.* 1, *A. B.* 1, 2, *B. L.* I was
not unwilling to leave them out.

axed him why that she weep so sore ?

She gan wepen ever longer the more,

As, quod she, that ever I was yborne !

As I have I said, (quod she) thus have I sworne.

And told him all, as ye have herd before : 11775

Needeth not reherse it you no more.

This husband with glad chere, in frendly wise,

Answerd, and sayd as I shal you devise ;

Other ought ellys, Dorigene, but this ?

Nay, nay, quod she, God helpe me so, as wis 11780

This is to much, and it were Goddes will.

Ye, wif, quod he, let slepen that is still ;

It may be wel paraventure yet to-day.

Ye shal your trouthe holden by my fay ;

For God so wisly have mercy on me, 11785

I had wel lever stiked for to be,

For veray love which that I to you have,

But if ye shuld your trouthe kepe and save :

Trouth is the hiest thing that man may kepe.

But with that word he braut anon to wepe, 11790

And sayd ; I you forbode, on peine of deth,

That never while you lasteth lif or breth

To no wight tell ye this misaventure ;

As I may best I wol my wo endure :

Ne make no contenance of hevynesse, 11795

That folk of you may demen harme or gesse.

And forth he cleped a squier and a maid.

Goth forth anon with Dorigene, he said,

D ij

And bringeth hire to swiche a place anon.
 They take hir leve, and on hir way they gon;
 But they ne witten why she thider went;
 She n'olde no wight tellen hire entent.

This squier which that highte Aurelius,
 On Dorigene that was so amorous,
 Of aventure happed hire to mete
 Amid the town, right in the quikkeſt ſtrete,
 As ſhe was bound to go the way forthright
 Toward the gardin, ther as ſhe had hight;
 And he was to the gardinward alſo,
 For wel he ſpied whan ſhe wolde go
 Out of hire hous to any maner place:
 But thus they met of aventure or grace,
 And he ſalueth hire with glad entent,
 And axeth of hire whiderward ſhe went..

And ſhe answered, half as ſhe were mad,
 Unto the gardin, as myn huſbond bad,

ψ. 11802. *She n'olde*] After this verſe ed. Ca. 2, has following;

Peraventure an hepe of you I wiſe
 Will holden him a lowed man in this
 That he woll put his wife in jeopardy;
 Herkneſh the Tale er ye upon him crie.
 She may have better fortune than you ſometh;
 And whan that ye han herde the Tale denieth.

Theſe lines are more in the ſtyle and manner of Chaucer interpolations generally are, but as I do not remember found them in any mſ. I could not receive them into it I think, too, that if they were written by him he would probably, upon more mature conſideration, have ſuppreſſed unneceſſarily anticipating the catastrophe of the Tale.

ψ. 11807. *As ſhe was bound*] Ready: this old word is from mſ. A. Aſh. 1, 2. See P. L. p. 256, 291.

My trouthe for to hold, alas! alas!

Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had gret compassion
Of hire, and of hire lamentation, 11820

And of Arviragus, the worthy knight,
That bad hire holden all that she had hight,
So loth him was his wif shuld breke hire trouthe;
And in his herte he caught of it gret routhe,
Considering the best on every side, 11825

That fro his lust yet were him lever abide
Thanne so high a cherlish wretchednesse
Ageins fraunchise and alle gentilleffe;
For which in fewe wordes sayd he thus:

Madame, say to your Lord Arviragus 11830
That sin I see the grete gentilleffe
Of him, and eke I see wel your distresse,
That him were lever have shame (and that were routhe)
Than ye to me shuld broken thus your trouthe,
I hadde wel lever ever to suffren wo 11835

Than to depart the love betwix you two.
I you relese, Madame; into your hond
Quit every seurement and every bond
That ye han made to me as herebefore
Sin thilke time that ye were yborne. 11840

Have here my trouthe. I shal you never repreve
Of no behest; and here I take my leve
As of the trewest and the beste wif
That ever yet I knew in all my lif.

But every wif beware of hire behofe; 2184
 On Dorigene remembreth at the left.
 Thus can a squier don a gentil dede
 As wel as can a knight, withouten drede.

She thanketh him upon hire knees bare; 2185
 And home unto hire husband is she fare,
 And told him all as ye han herd me fayd;
 And, trusteth me, he was so wel apayd
 That it were impossible me to write.

What shuld I lenger of this cas endite? 2186
 Arviragus and Dorigene his wif
 In soveraine blisse leden forth hir lif,
 Never eft ne was ther anger hem betwene;
 He cherished hire as though she were a queene,
 And she was to him trewe for evermore. 2187
 Of thise two folk ye get of me no more.

Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne,
 Curseth the time that ever he was borne.
 Alas! quod he, alas that I behight
 Of pured gold a thousand pound of wight
 Unto this philosophre! how shal I do?
 I see no more but that I am fordo.
 Min heritage mote I nedes sell,
 And ben a beggar here I n'ill not dwell,
 And shamen all my kinrede in this place,
 But I of him may geten better grace:
 But natheles I wol of him assay
 At certain daies yere by yere to pay,

And thanke him of his grete curtesie.

My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol not lie.

With herte fore he goth unto his cofre, 11875

And broughte gold unto this philosophre,

The value of five hundred pound I gesse,

And him besecbeth of his gentilleſſe

To graunt him daies of the remenaunt,

And sayde; Maister, I dare wel make avaunt 11880

I failed never of my trouthe as yet;

For fikerly my dette ſhal be quit

Towardes you, how ſo that ever I fare

To gon a begging in my kirtle bare :

But wold ye vouchen ſauf upon ſcurtee 11885

Two yere or three for to respiten me,

Than were I wel, for elles mote I ſell

Min heritage; ther is no more to tell.

This philosophre ſobrely anſwerd,

And ſaied thus, whan he thiſe wordes herd; 11890

Have I not holden covenant to thee ?

Yes, certes, wel and trewely, quod he.

Haſt thou not had thy lady as thee liketh ?

No, no, quod he, and ſorwefully he ſiketh.

What was the cauſe ? tell me if thou can. 11895

Aurelius his tale anon began,

And told him all as ye han herd before ;

It nedeth not reherſe it any more.

He ſayd, Arviragus of gentilleſſe

Had lever die in ſorwe and in diſtreſſe 11900

As though she wolde sayn, Lo, I Nature, 11945
 Thus can I forme and peinte a creature,
 Whan that me list: who can me contrefete?
 Biginalion? not though he ay forge and bete,
 Or grave, or peinte; for I dare wel sain
 Apelles, Xcuxis, shulden werche in vain 11950
 Other to grave, or peinte, or forge, or bete,
 If they presumed me to contrefete:
 For he that is the former principal
 Hath makid me his vicaire general
 To forme and peinten erthly creatures 11955
 Right as me list; and eche thing in my cure is
 Under the mone that may wane and waxe;
 And for my werk right nothing wol I axe:
 My lord and I ben ful of on accord;
 I made hire to the worship of my lord, 11960
 So do I all min other creatures,
 What colour that they han or what figures.
 Thus semeth me that Nature wolde say.
 This maid of age twelf yere was and tway
 In which that Nature hadde swiche delit; 11965
 For right as she can peinte a lily whit
 And red a rose, right with swiche peinture
 She peinted hath this noble creature
 Er she was borne upon hire limmes free,
 Whereas by right swiche colours shulden be; 11970
 And Phcebus died hath hire tresses grete
 Like to the stremes of his burned hete.

The which he knew for sotil and for bold. 12075

This juge unto this cherl his tale hath told

In secree wise, and made him to ensue

He shulde tell it to no creature,

And if he did he shulde lese his hede.

And whan assented was this curfed rede 12080

Glad was the juge, and maked him gret chere,

And yaf him yestes precious and dere.

Whan shapen was all hir conspiracie

Fro point to point, how that his lecherie

Parformed shulde be ful sotilly, 12085

As ye shul here it after openly,

Home goth this cherl, that highte Claudius;

This false juge, that highte Appius,

(So was his name, for it is no fable,

But knownen for an historial thing notable; 12090

The sentence of it soth is out of doute)

This false juge goth now fast aboute

To hasten his delit all that he may.

And so befell, sone after on a day

This false juge, as telleth us the storie, 12095

As he was wont, sat in his consistorie,

And yaf his domes upon sondry cas,

This false cherl came forth a ful gret pas,

told [ver. 5915—5944.] Claudius is called Sergeant of Appius; and accordingly Chaucer a little lower, ver. 12204, calls him Servant—unto—Appius.—In the *Discourse*, &c. § 29, I forgot to mention the *Rom. de la Rose* as one of the sources of this Tale, though upon examination I find that our Author has drawn more from thence than from either Gower or Livy.

And saide; Lord, if that it be your will,
As doth me right upon this pitous bill,
In which I plaine upon Virginius;
And if that he wol sayn it is not thus
I wol it preve, and finden good witnesse
That soth is that my bille wol expresse.

The juge answerd, Of this in his absence
I may not yeve diffinitif sentence.
Let don him call, and I wol gladly here:
Thou shalt have right and no wrong as now |

Virginius came to wete the juges will,
And right anon was red this cursed bill;
The sentence of it was as ye shul here.

To you my Lord Sire Appius so dere
Sheweth your poure servant Claudius
How that a knight called Virginius
Agein the lawe, agein all equitee,
Holdeth, expresse agein the will of me,
My servant which that is my thral by right,
Which from min hous was stolen on a night
While that she was ful yong; I wol it preve
By witnesse, Lord, so that it you not greve:
She n'is his doughter nought, what so he say;
Wherefore to you, my Lord the juge, I pray;
Yelde me my thral, if that it be your will.
Lo, this was all the sentence of his bill.

Virginius gan upon the cherl behold;
But hastily er he his tale told,

The which he knew for sotil and for bold. *200*
 This juge unto this cherl his tale hath told
 In secree wise, and made him to confesse
 He shulde tell it to no creature,
 And if he did he shulde lese his herte.
 And whan assented was this curialde rede *205*
 Glad was the juge, and toked him good lede,
 And yaf him yestes precious and deere.

Whan shapen was all his confederacie
 Fro point to point, how this his helth
 Parformed shulde he be sothfully, *210*
 As ye shul here it after openly,
 Home goth this cherl, that highte Chaucer,
 This false juge, that highte Appian.
 (So was his name, for it is so falsly,
 But known for an hundred thing available. *215*
 The sentence of it both is out of doubt)
 This false juge gith now full comfort
 To hallen his chere all that he may,
 And so befall, some other day
 This false juge, as telleth us the storie, *220*
 As he was went, for in his confederacie,
 And yaf his domes agan sundry way,
 This false cherl came forth a ful good way,

told (ver. 5125—this Chaucer called himself a jester
 and accordingly Chaucer a little jester, but Chaucer was not a
 Servant—was—Appian—in the original text of the poem
 to mention the name of the jester as one of the names of the
 Tale, though upon examination it find that the name was
 drawn more from chance than from either Greek or Latin.)

My pitous hond must smiten of this he
Alas that ever Appius thee say!
Thus hath he falsely juged thee to-day;
And told hire all the cas, as ye before
Han herd; it nedeth not to tell it more

O mercy, dere father! quod this maide
And with that word she both hire arme
About his necke, as she was wont to do
(The teeres braut out of hire eyen two)
And said, O goode father! shal I die?
Is ther no grace? is ther no remedie?

No certes, dere doughter min! quod I
Then yeve me leiser, father min, quod I
My deth for to complaine a litel space;
For parde Jepte yave his doughter grace
For to complaine or he hire slow, alas!
And God it wot nothing was hire trespas

✧. 12159. *For love*] *Rom. de la R.* 5871.;

*Ca par amour et sans balne
A la belle fille Virgine
Tantost a la seie coupee,
Et puis au Juge presentee
Devent tous en plain Consoire,
Et le Juge, selon l'hystoire.
Le commanda tantost a prendre—*

See below, ver. 12190—3. The speeches of Virgine
daughter are of Chaucer's own invention.

But for she ran hire father first to see,
 To welcome him with gret solcomptes.
 And with that word she fell aswoun anon,
 And after, whan hire swouning was agon, 12180
 She riseth up, and to hire father said;
 Blessed be God that I shal die a maad!
 Yeve me my deth or that I have a shame:
 Doth with your child your wille a Goddes name.
 And with that word she praised him ful oft 12185
 That with his swerd he wolde smite hire soft;
 And with that word aswoun again she fell.
 Hire father, with ful sorweful herte and will,
 Hire hed of smote, and by the top it hent,
 And to the juge he gun it to present, 12190
 As he sat yet in dome in consistorie,
 And whan the juge it saw, as saith the storie,
 He bad to take him and anhang him fast:
 But right anon a thousand peple in thrast
 To save the knight for routh and for pitee, 12195
 For knowen was the falsc iniquitee.

The peple anon had suspect in this thing,
 By maner of the cherles chalenging,
 That it was by the assent of Appius;
 They wisten wel that he was lecherous t 12200
 For which unto this Appius they gun,
 And caste him in a prison right anon,
 Whereas he flow himself; and Claudius,
 That servant was unto this Appius,

Was demed for to hange upon a tree, 12207
 But that Virginius of his pitee
 So prayed for him that he was exiled,
 And elles certes had he ben begiled :
 The remenant were anhangd, more and lesse,
 That were consentant of this cursednesse. 12210

Here men may see how fin hath his merite :
 Beth ware, for no man wot whom God wol smite
 In no degree, ne in which maner wise
 The worme of conscience may agrise
 Of wicked lif, though it so prives be 12215
 That no man wote therof sauf God and he ;
 For be he lawed man or elles lered
 He n'ot how sone that he shal ben afered :
 Therefore I rede you this conseil take,
 Forsaketh sinne or sinne you forsake. 12220

THE PARDONERES PROLOGUE.

Our Hoste gan to swere as he were wood,
 Harrow ! (quod he) by nailes and by blood
 This was a false cherl and a false justice.
 As shameful deth as herte can diuise
 Come to thife juges and hir advocas. 12225
 Algate this felly maide is slain, alas !
 Alas ! to dere abought she hire beautee ;
 Wherefore I say that al day man may see
 That yestes of Fortune and of Nature
 Ben cause of deth to many a creature. 12230

to have in mind the
to get at the heart of the
the way that the

1220.

the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

1221.

the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

1222.

the way that the

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1223.

the way that the

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the way that the

the way that the

the way that the

Said I not wel? I cannot speke in terme; 12245
 But wel I wot thou dost min herte to erme,
 That I have almost caught a cardiale;
 By *corpus Domini* but I have triacle;
 Or elles a draught of moist and corny ale,
 Or but I here anon a mery Tale, 12250
 Myn herte is lost for pitee of this maid.
 Thou *bel amy*, thou Pardoner, he said,
 Tel us som myrth of japes right anon.
 It shal be don; quod he, by Seint Ronion.
 But first (quod he) here at this ale-flake 12255
 I wol both dranke and biten on a cake.
 But right anon thise gentiles gan to crie;
 Nay, let him tell us of no ribaudrie:
 Tell us som moral thing, that we mow lere
 Som wit, and thanne wol we gladly here. 12260
 I graunte ywis, quod he; but I must thinke
 Upon som honest thing while that I drinke.

♪. 12245. *Said I not wel?* All the best mss. agree in giving this phrase to the Host in this place. It must remind us of the similar phrase, *Said I not wel?* which occurs so frequently in the mouth of Shakespeare's Host of the Garter, and may be sufficient, with the other circumstances of general resemblance, to make us believe that Shakespeare when he drew that character had not forgotten his Chaucer.

THE PARDONERS TALE.

quod he, in chirche whan I preche
to have an hautein speche,
out as round as goth a bell, 12265
I by rote that I tell.

alway on, and ever was,
um est cupiditas.

pronounce whennes that I come,
my bulles shew I all and some : 12270

ordes fele on my patente
I first, my body to warrente,
m be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
rbe of Cristes holy werk :
hat than tell I forth my tales. 12275

opes and of cardinales,
es and bishoppes, I shewe,
in I speke a wordes fewe
with my predication,
stere men to devotion : 12280

eres Tale:] A company of riotours conspire to kill
illeth them one after another. *Spekt.*

To saffron] So ms. *A.* and ed. *C.* 2. I have pre-
ie common reading, *f. 129r*, as more expressive,
to have been a gloss. *Saffron* was used to give
l as flavour.—The next lines are thus read in
1, 2, *HA.*;

village and in every town
my teme, and shal, and ever was,
salorum est cupi lias.
shew I forth, &c.

ought to have followed them.

Than shew I forth my longe cristal stoncs,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Relikes they ben, as wenen they arbon.

Than have I in laton a shulder bone
Which that was of an holy lewes shepe. 1228j

Good men, say I, take of my wordes kepe :
If that this bone be washe in any well,
If cow, or calf, or shepe, or ox, or swell
That any worm hath etc, or worm yfonge,
Take water of that well and wash his tonge, 12290
And it is hole anon : and forthermore,
Of pockes and of scab, and every fore,
Shal every shepe be hole that of this well
Drinketh a draught : take kepe of that I tell.

If that the good man that the bestes oweth 12295
Wol every weke, or that the cok him croweth,
Fasting ydrinken of this well a draught,
As thilke holy Jew our eldres taught,
His bestes and his store shal multiplie :

And. Sires, also it heleth jalousie ; 12300
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wif mistrust,
Though he the soth of hire defeaute wist,
Al had she taken precistes two or three. 12305

Here is a mitaine eke that ye may see :
He that his hand wol put in this mitaine
He shal have multiplying of his graine,

y. 12277. Fastig ydrinken] The prepositive particle *y* has
no added for the sake of the metre.

Whan he hath sowne, be it whete or otes,
So that he offer pens or elles grotes. 12310

And men and women, o thing warne I you;
If any wight be in this chirche now
That hath don sinne horrible, so that he
Dare not for shame of it yshriven be;
Or any woman, be she yong or old, 12315
That hath ymade hire husbond cokewold,
Swiche folk shul han no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place :
And who so findeth him out of swiche blame
He wol come up and offer in Goddes name, 12320
And I assayle him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle ygranted was to me.

By this gaude have I wonnen yere by yere
An hundred mark sin I was Pardonere.
I stonde like a clerk in my pulpet, 12325
And whan the sewed peple is doun yset
I preche so as ye han herd before,
And tell an hundred false japes more :
Than perne I me to stretchen forth my necke,
And sit and well upon the peple i becke, 12330
As doth a dove sitting upon a berne :
Myn hondes and my tonge gon so yerne,
That it is joye to see my besynesse.
Of avarice and of swiche curlednesse
Is all my preaching, for to make hem free 12335
To geve hir pens, and nanely unto me;

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F

For min entente is not but for to winne,
 And nothing for correction of sinne:
 I recke never whan that they be beried
 Though that hir soules gon a blake berie

For certes many a predication
 Cometh oft time of evil entention;
 Som for plesance of folk and flaterie,
 To ben avanced by hypocrisie;
 And som for vaine glorie, and som for h
 For whan I dare non other wayes debat
 Than wol I sting him with my tonge sn
 In preching, so that he shal not asterte
 To ben defamed falsely, if that he
 Hath trespassed to my brethren or to me
 For though I telle not his propre name,
 Men shal wel knowen that it is the same
 By signes, and by oþer circumstances.
 Thus quite I folk that don us displefance
 Thus spit I out my venime under hewe
 Of holinesse, to seme holy and trewe.
 But shortly min entente I wol devise;
 I preche of nothing but for covetise,
 Therfore my teme is yet, and ever was,
Radix malorum est cupiditas.

*. 12340. *gon a blake beried*] So all the mss. 1
Ask. 2, which reads *on blake be ryed*. Skinner ex
 ried to mean "in nigras et inauspicatas domos n
 cannot guess what it means.

*. 12341. *For certes*] See R. R. Ver. 5763.
 For oft gode predication
 Cometh of evil entencion.

Thus can I preche again the same vice
 Which that I use, and that is avarice.
 But though myself be guilty in that sinne,
 Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
 From avarice, and fore hem to repente; 12365
 But that is not my principal entente:
 I preche nothing but for covetise.
 Of this matere it ought ynough suffise.

Than tell I hem ensamples many on
 Of olde stories longe time agon, 12370
 For lewed peple loven tales olde;
 Swiche thinges can they wel report and holde.
 What? trowen-ye that whiles I may preche
 And winnen gold and silver for I teche,
 That I wol live in poverte wilfully? 12375
 Nay, nay; I thought it never trewely:
 For I wol preche and beg in sondry londes,
 I wol not do no labour with min hondes,
 Ne make baskettes for to live therby,
 Because I wol not beggen idelly. 12380

I wol non of the apostles contrefete;
 I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
 Al were it yeven of the pourest page,
 Or of the pourest widewe in a village,
 Al shulde hire children sterven for famine: 12385
 Nay, I wol drinke the licour of the vine,
 And have a joly wenche in every toun.

But herkeneth, Lordings, in conclusioun,

For though my tale be a litle vicious among
A moral Tale yet I you tellen can,
Which I am wont to prechen for to win
Now held your pees, my Tale I wol beg
In Flandres whilom was a compaignie
Of yonge folk that haunteden folie,
As hafard, riot, flewes, and tavernes,
Wheras with harpes, lutes, and giternes
They dance and plaie at dis bothe day ar
And ete also and drinke over hir might,
'Thurgh which they don the devil sacrifici
Within the devils temple, in cursed wise
By superfluitee abhominable.
Hir othes ben so gret and so damnable
'That it is grisly for to here hem swere.
Our blisful Lordes body they to tene

ingers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,
 Which ben the veray devils officeres,
 To kindle and blow the fire of lecherie, 12415
 That is annexed unto glotonie.

The holy writ take I to my witnesse
 That luxurie is in wine and dronkenesse.

Lo, how that dronken Loth unkindely
 Lay by his daughters two unwetingly; 12420
 So dronke he was he n'iste what he wrought.

Herodes, who so wel the stories sought,
 Whan he of wine replete was at his feste,
 Right at his owen table he yave his heste
 To sleen the Baptist John ful gilteles. 12425

Seneca saith a good word douteles;
 He saith he can no difference find
 Betwix a man that is out of his mind
 And a man whiche that is dronkelew;
 But that woodnesse, yfallen in a shrew, 12430
 Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.

O glotonie! full of cursednesse,
 O cause first of our confusion!
 O original of our damnation!

With respect to the termination in *here*, see the note on ver.
 2019; and in the next line *fruitereres* are to be understood to be
 female sellers of fruit.

✧. 12417. *The holy writ*] In marg. C. 1.; "Nolite inebriari
 vino, in quo est luxuria."

✧. 12426. *Seneca*] Perhaps he refers to Epist. 82.; "Extende
 in plures dies illum ebrii habitum: nunquid de furore dubi-
 tabis? nunc quoque non est minor sed brevior."

Til Crift had bought us with his blood again : 12435
 Loketh how dere, shortly for to fair,
 Abought was thilke curfed vilanie :
 Corrupt was all this world for glotonie.

Adam our father, and his wif also,
 Fro Paradis to labour and to wo 12440
 Were driven for that vice, it is no drede;
 For while that Adam fasted, as I rede,
 He was in Paradis, and whan that he
 Ete of the fruit defended on a tree
 Anon he was out cast to wo and peine. 12445
 O glotonie! on thee wel ought us plaine.

O wist a man how many maladies
 Folwen of exceſſe and of glotonies,
 He wolde ben the more meſurable
 Of his diete, fitting at his table. 12450
 Alas! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
 Maketh that est and west, and north and south,
 In erthe, in air, in water, men to-fwinke
 To gete a gloton deintee mete and drinke.
 Of this matere, O Poule! wel canst thou trete : 12455
 Mete unto wombe, and wombe eke unto mete,
 Shal God destroien bothe, as Paulus saith.
 Alas! a foule thing is it by my faith,

ψ. 12442. *For while that Adam*] At this line the margin of
 ms C. 1, quotes *Hieronym. c. Jovinian.*; "Quam diu jejunavit
 "Adam in Paradiso fuit. Comedit et ejectus est. Statim duxit
 "uxorem."

ψ. 12456. *Mete unto wombe*] In marg. C. 1.; "Ecca ven-
 "it."

To say this word, and fouler is the dede,
 Whan man so drinketh of the white and rede 12460
 That of his throte he maketh his priuee
 Thurgh thilke curfed superfluitee.

The apostle saith weping ful pitoussly,
 Ther walken many of which you told haue I;
 I say it now weping with pitous vois 12465
 That they ben enemies of Cristes crois,
 Of whiche the end is deth; womb is hir God:
 O wombe, o belley! stinking is thy cod,
 Fulfilled of dong and of corruption;
 At either end of thee foule is the soun. 12470
 How gret labour and cost is thee to find!
 Thise cokes how they stamp, and strein, and grind,
 And turnen substance into accident,
 To fulfill all thy likerous talent!
 Out of the hardy bones knocken they 12475
 The mary, for they casten nought away
 That may go thurgh the guller soft and sote:
 Of spicerie, of leef, of barke, and rote,
 Shal ben his fause ymaked, by delit
 To make him yet a newer appetit: 12480
 But certes he that haunteth swiche delices
 Is ded while that he liveth in tho vices.

✧. 12463. *The apostle saith*] *Philippians* iii. 18.

✧. 12463. *stinking is thy cod*] So ms. C.; or we may read,
 with ms. B. d. *o foule stinking cod*.

✧. 12471. *to find*] To supply: so ver. 14335.;

She found hireself and eke hire doughtren two.

¶ *See also P. P. fol. 80.;*

For a frend that findeth him falleth him never at nede.

A lecherous thing is wine, and dronkenesse
 Is ful of striving and of wretchednesse.
 O dronken man! disfigured is thy face, 1248
 Sour is thy breth, foul art thou to embrace,
 And thurgh thy dronken nose semeth the soan
 As though thou saidest ay Sampson! Sampson!
 And yet, God wot, Sampson dronk never no wine
 Thou falest as it were a stiked swine; 1249
 Thy tonge is lost, and all thin honest cure,
 For dronkenesse is veray sepulture
 Of mannes wit and his discretion.
 In whom that drinke hath domination
 He can no conseil kepe, it is no drede. 1249
 Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede,
 And namely fro the white wine of Lepe,
 That is to sell in Fishstrete and in Chepe.
 This wine of Spaigne crepeth subtilly
 In other wines growing faste by, 1250

v. 12497. *the white wine of Lepe*] According to the geographers Lepe was not far from Cadiz. This wine, of whatever sort it may have been, was probably much stronger than the Gascon wines usually drunk in England. La Rochelle and Bourdeaux, [ver. 12505,] the two chief ports of Gascony, were both in Chaucer's time part of the English dominions.—Spanish wines might also be more alluring upon account of the greater rarity. Among the orders of the royal household, 1604, is the following; [ms. *Harl.* 293, fol. 162.] "And wher
 " as in tymes past Spanishe wines, called Sacke, were little or no
 " whit used in our courte, and that in later years, though
 " of ordinary allowance, it was thought convenient that
 " blemen, &c. might have a boule or glasse, &c. We unde
 " standing that it is now used as common drinke, &c. redu
 " the allowance to xii gallons a day for the court," &c.

Of which ther riseth swiche fumositee,
 That whan a man hath dronken draughtes three,
 And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
 He is in Spaigne, right at the toun of Lepe,
 Not at the Rochell, ne at Burdeux toun, 12505
 And thanne wol he say Sampfoun ! Sampfoun !

But herkeneth, Lordings, o word, I you pray,
 That all the soveraine aetes, dare I say,
 Of victories in the Olde Testament,
 Thurgh veray God that is omnipotent, 12510
 Were don in abstinence and in prayere ;
 Loketh the Bible, and ther ye mow it lere.

Loke, Attila the grete conquerour
 Died in his slepe with shame and dishonour,
 Bleding ay at his nose in dronkenesse : 12515
 A capitaine shulde live in sobrenesse.

And over al! this aviseþ you right wel
 What was commanded unto Lamuel ;
 Not Samuel, but Lamuel, say I.
 Redeth the Bible, and find it expresly 12520
 Of wine yeving to hem that have justice.
 No more of this, for it may wel suffice.

And now that I have spoke of glotonic,
 Now wol I you defenden hasardrie.
 Hasard is veray moder of lesinges, 12525
 And of deccite and curfed forsweringes,
 Blaspheming of Crist, manslaughter, and wast also
 Of catel, and of time; and forthermo

†. 12520. *Red. to the Bible.] Proverbs xxxi. 4.*

It is reprove, and contrary of honour
 For to ben hold a commun hafardour, 12530
 And ever the higher he is of estat
 The more he is holden defolat.
 If that a prince useth hafarderie,
 In alle governance and policie
 He is, as by commun opinion, 12535
 Yhold the lesse in reputation.

Stilbon, that was a wise embassadour,
 Was sent to Corinth with ful gret honour
 Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliance;
 And whan he came he happed him *par chance* 12540
 That all the gretest that were of that lond
 Yplaying atte hafard he hem fond;
 For which, as sone as that it mighte be,
 He slele him home agein to his contree,

ψ. 12537. *Stilbon*] John of Salisbury (from whom our Author probably took this story and the following) calls him *Chilon*, *Polycrat.* l. i. c. 5.; "*Chilon* Lacedæmonius, iungendæ "*societatis causâ missus Corinthum, duces et seniores populi* "*ludentes invenit in alæa. Insesto itaque negotio reversus* "*est,"* &c. Accordingly in ver. 12539, *ms. C. 1*, reads very rightly *Lacedomye* instead of *Calidone*, the common reading. Our Author has used before *Lacedomie* for *Lacedæmon*, ver. 11692.

ψ. 12542. *Yplaying atte hafard*] I have added the prepositive *y* for the sake of the metre. *Atte* is a dissyllable. It was originally *atten*, and is so used by *R. G.* p. 379, 431. It has been frequently corrupted into *at the*; but in Chaucer it may (and I think should) almost every where be restored. See ver. 125, 3924, 4303, where some *ms.* have preserved the true readings—*at.e* Bowe; *atte* full.

THE PARDOYERES TALE.

And sayde ther, I wol not lese my name,
Ne wol not take on me so gret defame,
You for to allie unto non hafardours :
Sendeth som other wise embassadours,
For by my trouthe me were lever die
Than I you shuld to hafardours allie ;
For ye, that ben so glorious in honours,
Shal not allie you to non hafardours,
As by my wille, ne as by my tretee.
This wise philosophre thus sayd he.

Loke eke how to the King Demetrius
The King of Parthes, as the book sayth us,
Sent him a pair of dis of gold in scorne,
For he had used hafard therbefore,
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputacioun.
Lordes may finden other maner play
Honest ynough to drive the day away.

Now wol I speke of othes faile and grete
A word or two, as olde bookes trete.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The highe God forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew ; but in special
Of swering sayth the holy Jeremie,
Thou shalt swere soth thin othes, and not lie.
And swere in dome, and eke in rightwisnesse
But idel swering is a cursednesse.

Behold and see that in the firste table
 Of highe Goddes bestes honourable
 How that the second best of him is this, 125
 Take not my name in idel or amis.
 Lo, rather he forbedeth swiche swering
 Than homicide or many an other thing.
 I say that as by ordre thus it stondeth,
 This knoweth he that his bestes understondeth 130
 How that the second best of God is that :
 And forthermore, I wol thee tell all plat
 That vengeance shal not parten from his houn-
 That of his othes is outrageous.
 By Goddes precious herte, and by his nailes, 135
 And by the blood of Crist that is in Hailes,
 Seven is my chance, and thin is cink and treye :
 By Goddes armes if thou falsly pleye

¶. 12585. *his nailes*] i. e. with which he was nailed to cross. Sir J. Mandeville, c. vii. ; " And thereby in the wall
 " the place where the 4 *nailes* of our Lord weren hidd, for
 " had 2 in his hondes and 2 in his feet ; and of one of theise
 " Emperour of Costantynoble made a brydille to his hors,
 " bere him in bataylle, and thorgh vertue thereof he ov-
 " came his enemies," &c. He had said before, c. ii. that "
 " of the *nailes* that Crist was naylled with on the cross"
 at Costantynoble, and " on in France in the kinges chapel
 ¶. 12586. *the blood—in Hailes*] The Abbey of *Hailes* in Glou-
 cestershire was founded by Richard King of the Romans, 1
 ther to Henry III. This precious relick, which was afterwa-
 commonly called " the blood of *Hailes*," was brought ou-
 Germany by the son of Richard, Edmund, who bestowed a 1
 part of it upon his father's Abbey of *Hailes*, and some time a
 gave the other two parts to an abbey of his own foundation
Athrug near Berkhamsted. *Hellingh.* v. li. p. 275.

This dagger shal thurghout thin herte go.
 This fruit cometh of the bicchel bonestwo, 12590
 Forswering, ire, falsenesse, and homicide.

Now for the love of Crist, that for us dide,
 Leteth your othes both gret and smale.
 But, Sires, now wol I tell you forth my Tale.

Thise riotoures three of which I tell, 12595
 Long erst or prime rong of any bell,
 Were set hem in a tavern for to drinke,
 And as they sat they herd a belle clinke
 Before a corps was caried to his grave;
 That on of hem gan callen to his knave, 12600
 Go bet, quod he, and axe redily
 What corps is this that passeth here forth by,

✧. 12590. *the bicchel bones two*] The common reading is *thikke bones*. The alteration which I have ventured to make is not authorized entirely by any ms. but in part by several: ms. *A.* reads *bichet*; *C.* 1, *the beched*; *HA.* and *H.* *the bicched*.; *C.* *B.* 5. *Nc.* ed. *Ca.* 1, *the bicchid*; *B.* α. *the bicche*; ed. *Ca.* 2, *the litched*. *Bickelen*, as explained by Killian, is *talus, ovillus et lusorius*; and *bickelen, talis ludere*. See also *Had. Junii Nomencl.* n. 213. Our dice indeed are the ancient *tesseæ*, (κῦβοι) not *tali*, (αἰσχρογὰλοι) but both being games of hazard the implements of one might be easily attributed to the other. It should seem from *Junius, loc. cit.* that the Germans had preserved the custom of playing with the natural bones, as they have different names for a game with *tali ovilli*, and another with *tali bululi*.

✧. 12601. *Go bet*] The same phrase is used in *Leg. of G. IV.* *Dido*, 288.;

The herd of hartes founden is anon,
 With ley go bet, pricke thou, let gon, let gon——

where it seems to be a term of the chase.

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G

And loke that thou report his name wel,
 Sir, quod this boy, it nedeth never a del;
 It was me told or ye came here two houres; 1260
 He was purde an old felaw of yours,
 And sodenly he was yslain to-night,
 Fordronke as he sat on his benche upright;
 Ther came a priuee theef men clopen Deth,
 That in this contree all the peple sleth, 1261
 And with his spere he smote his herte atwe,
 And went his way withouten wordes mo.
 He hath a thousand slain this pestilence;
 And, maister, or ye come in his presence
 Me thinketh that it were ful necessarie 1262
 For to beware of swiche an adversarie:
 Beth redy for to mete him evermore;
 Thus taughte me my dame; I say no more.

By Seinte Marie, sayd this tavernere,
 The child sayth soth, for he hath slain this yere, 1263
 Hens over a mile, within a gret village,
 Both man and woman, child, and hyne and page;
 I trowe his habitation be there:
 To ben avised gret wisdome it were
 Or that he did a man a dishonour. 1264

Ye, Goddes armes, quod this riotour,
 Is it swiche peril with him for to mete?
 I shal him seke by stile and eke by strete,
 I make a vow by Goddes digne bones.
 Herkeneth, felawes, we three ben alle ones; 1265

Let eche of us hold up his hond to other,
 And eche of us becomen others brother,
 And we wol slen this false traitour Deth :
 He shal be slain, he that so many sleth,
 By Goddes dignitee, or it be night. 12635

Togeder han thise three hir trouthes plight
 To live and dien eche of hem for other,
 As though he were his owen boren brother.
 And up they stert al dronken in this rage,
 And forth they gon towards that village 12640
 Of which the taverner had spoke befor,
 And many a grisly oth than have they sworn,
 And Cristes blessed body they to-rent,
 Deth shal be ded, if that we may him hent.

Whan they han gon not fully half a mile, 12645
 Right as they wold han troden over a stile,
 An olde man and a poure with hem mette :
 This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
 And sayde thus; Now, Lordes, God you see!

The proudest of thise riotours three 12650
 Answerd agen; What? cherl, with sory grace,
 Why art thou all forwrapped save thy face?
 Why livest thou so longe in so gret age?

This olde man gan loke in his visage,
 And sayde thus; For I ne cannot finde 12655
 A man, though that I walked into Inde,
 Neither in citee ne in no village,
 That wolde change his youthe for min age;

And therfore mete I han myn age fill
 As longe time as is Goddes will.
 Ne Deth, alas ! ne wil not han my lif :
 Thus walke I like a relesles carif,
 And on the ground, which is my mores gate
 I knocke with my shaf erlich and late,
 And say to hire, Leve mother, let me in.
 Lo, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin.
 Alas ! whan shal my bones ben at reste ?
 Mother, with you wold I changen my cheste,
 That in my chambre longe time hath be,
 Ye, for an heren clout to wrap in me.
 But yet to me she wol not don that grace,
 For which ful pale and welked is my face.

But, Sires, to you it is no curtesie
 To speke unto an olde man vilanie,
 But he trespase in word or elles in dede.
 In holy writ ye moun yourselven rede
 Ageins an olde man hore upon his hede
 Ye shuld arise : therfore I yeve you rede
 Ne doth unto an olde man non harm now,
 No more than that ye wold a man did you
 In age, if that ye may so long abide ;
 And God be with you wher ye go or ride :
 I moste go thider as I have to go.

Nay, olde cherl, by God thou shalt not so,
 Sayde this other hafardour anon ;
 Thou partest not so lightly, by Seint John.

Thou spake right now of thilke traitour Deth,
 That in this contree all our frendes sleth ;
 Have here my trouth, as thou art his espie,
 Tell wher he is, or thou shalt it abie 12690
 By God and by the holy sacrement,
 For sothly thou art on of his assent
 To slen us yonge folk, thou false these.

Now, Sires, quod he, if it be you so lese
 To finden Deth, tourne up this croked way, 12695
 For in that grove I left him by my say
 Under a tree, and ther he wol abide,
 Ne for your boht he wol him nothing hide.
 Se ye that oke ? right ther ye shuln him find.
 God save you that bought agen mankind, 12700
 And you amende ! Thus sayd this olde man.

And everich of thise riotoures ran
 Til they came to the tree, and ther they found
 Of Floreins fine of gold ycoined round
 Wel nigh an eighte bushels, as hem thought : 12705
 No lenger than after Deth they fought,
 But eche of hem so glad was of the sight,
 For that the Floreins ben so faire and bright,
 That doun they sette hem by the precious hord ;
 The werste of hem he spake the firste word. 12710

Brethren, quod he, take kepe what I shal say ;
 My wit is gret though that I bourde and play.
 This tresour hath Fortune unto us yeven,
 In mirth and jolitee our lif to liven,

And lightly as it cometh so wol we spend. 12719
 Ey, Goddes precions dignitee ! who wend
 To-day that we shuld han so faire a grace ?
 But might this gold be caried fro this place
 Home to myn hous, or elles unto youre,
 (For wel I wote that all this gold is oures) 12720
 Thanne were we in high felicittee ;
 But trewely by day it may not be,
 Men wolden say that we were theeves strong,
 And for our owen trefour don us hong.
 This trefour must ycaried be by night 12721
 As wisely and as sleighly as it might ;
 Wherefore I rede that cut among us alle
 We drawe, and let see wher the cut wol falle ;
 And he that hath the cut, with herte blith,
 Shal rennen to the toun, and that ful swith, 12730
 And bring us bred and win ful prively ;
 And two of us shal kepen subtilly
 This trefour wel ; and if he wol not tarien,
 Whan it is night we wol this trefour carien
 By on assent wher as us thinketh best. 12735
 That on of hem the cut brought in his fest,
 And bad hem drawe, and loke wher it wold falle,
 And it fell on the yongest of hem alle,
 And forth toward the toun he went anon :
 And al so sone as that he was agon 12740
 That on of hem spake thus unto that other ;
 Thou wotest wel thou art my sweren brother,

Thy profits wol I tell thee right anon.
Thou wost wel that our felaw is agon,
And here is gold, and that ful gret plentee, 12745
That shal departed ben among us three;
But natheles, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two
Had I not don a frendes turn to thee?

That other answerd, I n'ot how that may be: 12750
He wote wel that the gold is with us tweye.
What shuln we don? what shuln we to him seye?

Shal it be conseil? sayd the firste shrewe,
And I shal tellen thee in wordes fewe
What we shal don, and bring it wel aboute. 12755

I grante, quod that other, out of doute,
That by my trowth I wol thee not bewreie.

Now, quod the first, thou wost wel we ben tweie,
And tweie of us shal strengre be than on.
Loke, whan that he is set thou right anon 12760

Arise, as though thou woldest with him play,
And I shal rive him thurgh the sides tway
While that thou stroglest with him as in game,
And with thy dagger loke thou do the same;
And than shal all this gold departed be, 12765

My dere frend! betwixen thee and me;
'Than moun we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And play at dis right at our owen wille.
And thus accorded ben thise shrewes tweye
To slen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye. 12770

Thus ended ben thise homicides two,
And eke the false empoisoner also.

O cursednesse of alle cursednesse!
O traitours homicide! o wickednesse! 12830
O glotonie, luxurie, and hafardrie!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vilanie
And othes grete of usage and of pride!
Alas! mankinde, how may it betide
That to thy Creatour, which that thee wrought, 12835
And with his precious herte-blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so unkind? alas!

Now, good men, God foryeve you your trespass,
And ware you fro the sinne of avarice.
Min holy pardon may you all warice, 12840
So that ye offre nobles or starlinges,
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your hed under this holy bulle.
Cometh up, ye wives, and offreth of your wolle;
Your names I entre here in my roll anon; 12845
Into the blisse of heven shul ye gon:
I you assoile by min high powere,
You that wiln offre, as clene and eke as clere
As ye were borne. Lo, Sires, thus I preche;
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche, 12850
So graunte you his pardon to receive,
For that is best, I wol you not deceive.

But, Sires, o word forgate I in my Tale;
I have relikes and pardon in my male

As faire as any man in Englelond, 12855
Which were me yeven by the Popes hond.
If any of you wol of devotion
Offren, and han min absolution, 7.
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth here adoun,
And mekely receiveth my pardoun; 12860
Or elles taketh pardon as ye wende,
Al newe and freshe at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alway newe and newe
Nobles or pens which that ben good and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is here 12865
That ye moun have a sufficient Pardonere .
To assoilen you in contree as ye ride
For aventures which that moun betide.
Paraventure ther may falle on or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his necke atwo. 12870
Loke, which a seurtee is it to you alle
That I am in your felawship yfalle,
That may assoile you both more and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our Hoste shal beginne, 12875
For he is most enveloped in finne.
Come forth, Sire Hoste, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse the reliques everich on,
Ye for a grote : unbokel anon thy purse.
Nay, nay, quod he; than have I Cristes curse.
Let be, quod he; it shal not be, so the ich. 12881
'Thou woldest make me kisse thin olde brech,

We leven all in the gret God, quod he :
 He wolde sownen som difficultee,
 Or springen cockle in our clene corne;
 And therefore Hoste, I warne thee beforne
 My joly body shal a Tale telle, 12925
 And I shal clinken you so mery a belle
 That I shal waken all this compaignie;
 But it shal not ben of philosophie,
 Ne of phylike, ne termes quaints of laws:
 Ther is but litel Latin in my mawe. 12930

THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

A Marchant whilom dwelled at Seint Denise
 That riche was, for which men held him wise:
 A wif he had of excellent beautee,
 And compaignable and revelous was she,

giving of this Prologue to the Shipman. In mss. C. and D. this passage is given to the Sompnoir, but not by way of Prologue to his Tale. In C. it is followed by 'The Wife of Bathes Prologue, and in D. by the Prologue which in this edit. is prefixed to 'The Squieres Tale'.—When these diversities are considered, and also that the whole passage is wanting in the five best mss. it may perhaps appear not improbable that these twenty eight lines, though composed by Chaucer, had not been inserted by him in the body of his Work, that they were therefore omitted in the first copies, and were afterwards injudiciously prefixed to 'The Squieres Tale when the true Prologue of that Tale, as printed above, was become unsuitable, by reason of the Tale itself being removed out of its proper place.

*. 12923. *springen cockle*] This seems to allude to *Loller* as derived from *lolium*; but *Du Cange*, in v. *Lollar dus*, rather supposes that *Lollar* was a word of German original, signifying *quacktor*, a mumbler of prayers. See also *Kilian*, in v. *Lolard*.

The Shipman's Tale] A marchant of St. Denise is confined

THE SHIPMANNES PROLOGUE.

OUR Hoste upon his stirrops stode anon,
 And saide, Good men, herkeneth everich on,
 This was a thrifty Tale for the nones. 12905

Sire Parish Preeſt; quod he, for Goddes bones
 Tell us a Tale, as was thy forward yore;

I see wel that ye lerned men in lore

Can mochel good, by Goddes dignitee.

The Person him answerd, *Benedicite!* 12910

What cileth the man so sinfully to swere?

Our Hoste answerd, O Jankin! be ye there?

Now good men, quod our Hoste, herkneth to me;

I smell a Loller in the wind, quod he:

Abideth for Goddes digne passion, 12915

For we shal han a predication:

This Loller here wol prechen us somwhat.

Nay, by my fathers soule, that shal he nat,

Sayde the Shipman; here shal he nat preche;

He shal no gospel glosen here ne teche. 12920

¶ 12914. *I smell a Loller*] This is in character, as appears from a treatise of the time, *Hist. Catal.* n. 1666, § “Now in Eng-
 “land it is a comun protectioun ayens persecutioun—if a man
 “is customable to swere nedecles, and fals, and unavised, by the
 “bones, nailes, and sides, and other membres of Crist.—And
 “to abseyne fro othes nedecles and unlesful—and repteve sinne
 “by way of charite, is mater and cause now why prelates
 “and sum lordes sleaundren men, and clepen hem *Lollardes*,
 “*Eretikes*,” &c.

¶ 12919. *Sayde the shipman*] So ms. B. D. the one ms. (as I have said in the *Discourse*, &c. § 31,) which counterances the

Acquainted was so with this goode man,
 Sithen that hir firste knowlege began, 1196
 That in his hous as familier was he
 As it possible is any frend to be.
 And for as moch as this goode man
 And eke this monk of which that I began
 Were bothe two yborne in v village, 1196
 The monk him claimeth as for cofinage,
 And he again him sayd not ones nay;
 But was as glad therof as foute of day,
 For to his herte it was a gret plesance.

Thus ben they knit with eterne alliance, 1197
 And eche of hem gan other for to ensue
 Of brotherhed while that hir lif may dure.

Free was Dan John, and namely of dispence,
 As in that hous, and ful of diligence
 To don plesance, and also gret cofage: 1197
 He not forgate to yeve the leste paye
 In all that hous, but after hir degre
 He yave the lord and sithen his meinee,
 Whan that he came, som maner honest thing,
 For which they were as glad of his coming 1198
 As foule is fayn whan that the sonne up riseth.
 No more of this as now, for it suffiseth.

But so befell this marchant on a day
 Shope him to maken redy his array
 Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare, 1198
 To byen ther a portion of ware,

For which he hath to Paris sent anon
 A messager, and praied hath Dan John
 That he shuld come to Seint Denis, and pleie
 With him and with his wif a day or tweie, 12990
 Or he to Brugges went, in alle wise.

This noble monk, of which I you devise,
 Hath of his abbot as him list licence,
 (Because he was a man of high prudence,
 And eke an officer out for to ride 12995
 To seen hir granges and hir bernies wide)
 And unto Seint Denis he cometh anon.

Who was so welcome as my Lord Dan John,
 Our dere cousin, ful of curtesie?
 With him he brought a jubbe of Malvesie, 13000
 And eke another ful of fine Vernage,
 And volatile, as ay was his usage.
 And thus I let hem ete, and drinke, and pleye,
 This marchant and this monk, a day or tweye.

The thridde day this marchant up ariseth, 13005
 And on his nedes sadly him aviseth,
 And up into his countour hous goth he,
 To reken with himselfen, wel may be,
 Of thilke vere how that it with him stood,
 And how that he dispended had his good, 13110
 And if that he encrefed were or non.
 His bookes and his bagges many on

✱. 13000. *Malvesie*] See the note on ver. 9681.

He layth befor him on his counting bord.
 Ful riche was his tresour and his hord,
 For which ful fast his countour dore he shet, 1301;
 And eke he n'olde no man shuld him let
 Of his accountes for the mene time;
 And thus he sit til it was passed prime.

Dan John was risen in the morwe also,
 And in the gardin walketh to and fro, 1302
 And hath his thinges sayd ful curteisly.
 This goode wif came walking prively

Into the gardin ther he walketh soft,
 And him salueth, as she hath don oft : 130
 A maiden child came in hire compaignie,
 Which as hire lust she may governe and gie,
 For yet under the yerde was the maide.

O dere cosin min ! Dan John, she saide,
 What aileth you so rathe for to arise ?

Nece, quod he, it ought nough suffise 1
 Five houres for to slepe upon a night,
 But it were for an olde appalled wight,

*. 13027. under [the yerde] This was properly said
 dren. Mf. Bod. Jun. 66. Monachicum Colloquium, Sax. La

Mag. Quid manducas in die ?
 Hæret yst thu on dag ?

Dis. Adhuc carnibus vescor,
 Gyt flæiscmetum ic bruce,

quia puer sum
 Fortham cild ic eom

sub virga degeni.

under gyrda drohtsiende.

See before, ver. 7898.

en thise wedded men, that lie and dare,
 n a fourme sitteth a wery hare
 re al forstraught with houndes gret and smale.
 at, dere nece! why be ye so pale? 13036

A trowe certes that our goode man
 Hath you laboured sith this night began,
 That you were nede to resten hastily.
 And with that word he lough ful merily, 13040
 And of his owen thought he waxe all red.

This faire wif gan for to shake hire hed,
 And saied thus; Ye, God wote all, quod she:
 Nay, cosin min, it stant not so with me;
 For by that God that yave me soule and lif 13045
 In all the reame of Fraunce is ther no wif
 That lasse lust hath to that sory play,
 For I may sing alas and wala wa
 That I was borne! but to no wight (quod she)
 Dare I not tell how that it stant with me; 13050
 Wherefore I thinke out of this lond to wende,
 Or elles of myself to make an ende,
 So ful am I of drede and eke of care.

This monk began upon this wif to stare,
 And sayd, Alas! my nece, God forbede 13055
 That ye for any sorwe or any drede
 Fordo yourself: but telleth me your grese,
 Paraventure I may in your mischese
 Conseile or helpe; and therefore telleth me
 All your annoy, for it shal ben secree; 13060

For on my portos here I make an oth
That never in my lif, for lefe ne loth,
Ne shal I of no conseil you bewray.

The same agen to you, quod she, I say.
By God and by this portos I you swere, 1301
Though men me wolden all in peces tere,
Ne shal I never, for to gon to helle,
Bewrey o word of thing that ye me tell;
Nought for no cofinage ne alliance,
But veraily for love and affiance. 1302
Thus ben they sworne, and hereupon they kiste,
And eche of hem told other what hem lisse.

Cofin, quod she, if that I had a space,
As I have non, and namely in this place,
Than wold I tell a legend of my lif, 1303
What I have suffred sith I was a wif
With min husbond, al be he your cofin.

Nay, quod this monk, by God and Seint Martin
He n'is no more cofin unto me
Than is the leef that hangeth on the tree; 1304
I clepe him so, by Seint Denis of France,
To han the more cause of acquaintance
Of you, which I have loved specially
Aboven alle women likerly;

¶ 13061. on my portos] i. e. Breviary. *Du Cange*, in v. *Po-
tiferium*. *Portuaffes* are mentioned among other prohibi-
tions in the stat. 3 and 4 E. VI. c. 10.; and in the parliamen-
t roll of 7 E. IV. n. 40. there is a petition that the robbing of
Portecous—Grayell, Manuell, &c. should be made felony wh-
out clergy, to which the king answered *Le Roy s'aviserà*.

This swere I you on my professioun. 13085
 Tellethe your grefe; lest that he come adoun,
 And haileth you, and goth away anon.

My dere love! quod she, o my Dan John!
 Ful lefe were me this conseil for to hide,
 But out it mote, I may no longer abide. 13090

Myn husband is to me the werste man
 That ever was sith that the world began;
 But sith I am a wif, it fit not me,
 To tellen no wight of our privetes
 Neither in bed ne in non other place; 13095
 God shilde I shulde it tellen for his grace:
 A wif ne shal not sayn of hire husband
 But all honour, as I can understond;
 Save unto you thus moche, I tellen shal:

As helpe me God he is nought worth at all, 13100
 In no degree the value of a flec.

But yet me greveth most his nigardie:

And wel ye wor that women naturally

Desiren thinges fixe as well as I;

They wolden that hir husbandes shulden be 13105

Hardy, and wise, and riche, and therto free,

And buxome to his wif, and fresh a-bedde.

But by that ilke Lord that for us bledde,

For his honour myselven for to array,

A Sondag next I muste nedes pay 13110

An hundred franks, or elles am I lorne;

Yet were me lever that I were unborne

Than were don a sclandre or vilanie.
 And if myn husbond eke might it espie
 I n'ere but lost; and therefore I you pray . . . 13
 Lene me this summe, or elles mote I dey:
 Dan John, I say, lene me this hundred frankes;
 Parde I wol not faille you my thanks,
 If that you list to do that I you pray;
 For at a certain day I wol you pay, . . . 13
 And do to you what plesance and service
 That I may don, right as you list devise;
 And but I do God take on me vengeance
 As foul as eyer had Genelon of France.

This gentil monk answerd in this manere: 13
 Now trewely, min owen lady dere!
 I have (quod he) on you so grete a routhe,
 That I you swere, and plichte you my trouthe,
 That whan your husbond is to Flandres fare
 I wol deliver you out of this care, . . . 13
 For I wol bringen you an hundred frankes.
 And with that word he caught hire by the flank
 And hire embraced hard, and kiste hire oft.
 Goth now your way, quod he, al stille and soft,
 And let us dine as sone as that ye may, . . . 13
 For by my kalender it is prime of day:
 Goth now, and beth as trewe as I shal be.
 Now elles God forbede, Sire, quod she.
 And forth she goth as joly as a pie,
 And bad the cokes that they shuld hem hie, 13

o that man mighten dine, and that anon.
 To hire husband is this wif ygon.
 And knocketh at his countour boldely.
Qui est la? quod he. Peter, it am I,
 Quod she. What, Sire, how longe wol ye fast? 13145
 How longe time wol ye reken and cast
 Your summes, and your bookes, and your thinges?
 The devil have part of all swiche rekeninges!
 I can ynough parde of Goddes fonde.
 Come down to-day, and let your bagges stonde.
 Be ye not ashamed that Dan John 13151
 Hal fasting all this day clenge gon?
 What! let us here a masse, and go we dine.
 Wif, quod this man, litel canst thou divine
 The curious besynesse that we have; 13155
 For of us chapmen, all so God me save,
 And by that lord that cleped is Seint Iue,
 Scarcly amonges twenty ten shul thrive
 Continuelly, fasting unto oure age.
 We moun wel maken chere and good visage, 13160
 And driven forth the world as it may be,
 And kepen oure estat in privitee
 Til we be ded, or elles that we play
 A pilgrimage, or gon out of the way:
 And therefore have I gret necessitee 13165
 Upon this queinte world to avisen me;
 For evermore mote we stond in drede
 Of hap and fortune in our chapmanhede.

To Flanders wol I go to-morrowe day,
 And come agin as sone as ever I may, 13174
 For which, my dere, wif! I thee beseeke.
 As be to every wight butom and nicks,
 And for to kepe our good, be curious,
 And honestly governe wel our house.
 Thou hast ynough in every maner wise 13175
 That to a thrifty household may suffice.
 Thee lacketh non array, as no vitailles,
 Of silver in thy purse shalt thou not faille.
 And with that word his countour dide he shette,
 And doun he goth; no longer wold he lette; 13180
 And hastily a masse was ther saide,
 And spedily the tables were ylaide,
 And to the diner faste they hem spedde,
 And richely this monk the chapman fedde.

And after diner Dan John sobrely 1318
 This chapman toke apart, and prively
 He said him thus; Cosin, it stondeth so
 That wel I see to Brugges ye wol go;
 God and Seint Austin spede you and gide!
 I pray you, cosin, wisely that ye ride; 1319
 Governeth you also of your diete
 Attemprely, and namely in this here.
 Betwix us two nedeth no strange fare:
 Farewel, cosin, God shilde you fro care!
 If any thing ther be by day or night,
 If it lie in my power and my night,

THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

That ye me wol commended in any wise,
It shal be don right as ye wol devise.

But o thing as ye go, if it may be;
I wolde prayen you for to lene me
An hundred frankes for a weke or tweye,
For certain bestes that I muste beye,
To storen with a place that is oures,
(God help me so I wold that it were yours)
I shal not faille surely of my day,
Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way.
But let this thing be secree, I you preye;
For yet to-night thise bestes mote I beye.
And fare now wel, min owen cofin dere!
Grand mercy of your coit and of your chere.

This noble marchant gentilly anon
Answerd and said, O cofin min, Dan John!
Now likerly this is a smal requeste;
My gold is yours, whan that it you leste,
And not only my gold but my chaffare:
Take what you lest, God shilde that ye spare.
But o thing is, ye know it wel ynough
Of chapmen that hir money is hir plough:
We moun creancen while we han a name,
But goodles for to ben it is no game.
Pay it agen whan it lith in your ese:
After my might ful fayn wold I you plese.

Thise hundred frankes fet he forth anon,
And prively he toke hem to Dan John:

No wight in al this world wist of this ~~hous~~ : 1322
 Saving this marchant and Dan John ~~hous~~ :
 They drinke, and speke, and some ~~se~~ whiles and pleye,
 Til that Dan John rideth to his abbeye.

The morwe came, and forth this marchant rideth
 To Flandres ward; his pccatis wel him giveth
 Til he came in to Brugges merrily: 1323
 Now goth this marchant faste and besily
 About his nede, and bieth, and crouneth;
 He neither playeth at the die ne danceeth,
 But as a marchant, shortly for to tell, 1324
 He ledeth his lif; and ther I let him dwell.

The Sonday next the marchant was agon
 To Seint Denis ycomen is Dan John,
 With croune and berde all fresh and newe yhave.
 In all the hous ther n'as so litel a knave; 1325
 Ne no wight elles; that he n'as ful fain
 For that my Lord Dan John was come again.
 And shortly to the point right for to gon,
 This faire wif accordeth with Dan John
 That for thise hundred frankes he shuld all night
 Haven hire in his armes bolt upright: 1326
 And this accord performed was in dede.
 In mirth all night a besy lif they lede

✱. 13246. *Haven hire*] The final *n* in *Haven* has been added for the sake of the metre, but unnecessarily, as the *e* feminine may be pronounced before *h* as before a consonant. See the n. on ver. 300.

Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way,
And bad the stoune farewel; have good day: 13250
For non of hem, neme wight in the toun,
Hath of Dan John right non suspition:
And forth he rideth home to his abbey,
Or wher him life; so more of him I sey.

This marchant, when that ended was the faire,
To Seint Denis he gan fer to repaire, . . . 13256
And with his wif he maketh felle and chere,
And telleth hire that chaffare is so dere
That nedes myghte he make a chevifance,
For he was bounde in a recognisance 13260
To payen twenty thousand sheldes anon:
For which this marchant is to Paris gon
To borwe of certain frendes that he hadde
A certain frankes, and som with him he ladde.
And whan that he was come in to the toun, 13265
For gret chierte and gret affection
Unto Dan John he goth him first to pleye,
Not for to axe or borwe of him moneye,
But for to wete and seen of his welfare,
And for to tellen him of his chaffare, 13270
As frendes don whan they ben mette in fere.

Dan John him maketh feste and mery chere,
And he him tolde agen ful specially
How he had wel ybought and graciously
(Thanked be God) all hole his marchandise, 13275
Save that he must in alle manere wise

THE SHIPMAN'S TALE

I kepe not of his tokenes never a del;
 He toke me certain gold, I wote it wel.
 What! evil thesme on his mannes soone; I3333
 For God it wot I wend withouten doute
 That he had yve it me because of yow;
 To don ether with min honour and my yow
 For cofinage and eke for del; I3340
 That he hath had ful often times here!
 But sith I see I stonde in swiche dubynne
 I wol answere you shortly to the point.
 Ye have no slakke detours than am I;
 For I wol pay you wel and redily I3345
 Fro day to day; and if so be I faille,
 I am your wif; score it upon my taile,
 And I shal pay as sone as ever I may;
 For by my trouth I have on min array,
 And not in wafe, bestowed it every del; I3350
 And for I have bestowed it so wel
 For your honour, for Goddes sake I say
 As beth not wrothe, but let us laugh and play:
 Ye shal my joly body han to wedde;
 By God I n'ill not pay you but a-bedde: I3355
 Foryeve it me, min owen spoufe dere!
 Turne hitherward, and maketh better chere.
 'This marchant saw ther was no remedy,
 And for to chide it n'ere but a foly,
 Sith that the thing may not amended be.
 Now wif, he said, and I foryeve it thee; I3360

But by thy lif be ne no more so large;
 Kepe bet my good; this yeve I thee in charge.
 Thus endeth now my Tale, and God us sende
 Taling ynough unto our lives ende.

THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE.

WE^{EL} said, by *corpus Domini*, quod our Hoste; 13365
 Now longe mote thou sailen by the coste,
 Thou gentil maister, gentil marinere.
 God give the monke a thousand last quad yere.
 A ha! felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape.
 The monke put in the mannes hode an ape, 13370
 And in his wifes eke, by Seint Austin.
 Draweth no monkes more into your in.

But now passe over, and let us seke aboute
 Who shal now tellen first of all this route
 Another Tale: and with that word he said, 13375
 As curteisly as it had ben a maid;

My Lady Prioreffe, by your leve,
 So that I wist I shuld you not agreve,
 I wolde demen that ye tellen shold
 A Tale next, if so were that ye wold. 13380
 Now wol ye vouchesauf, may Lady dere?

Gladly, quod she; and saide as ye shul here.

✥. 13368. *a thousand last quad yere*] *Last*, in Teut. is *onus*, *farcina*, Killan; and *quaed* in the same language is *malus*: the meaning therefore is, God give the monke *a thousand last* (ever so great a weight) of *quad yere* (bad years, misfortune.) The Italians use *mal anno* in the same sense.

I kepe not of his tokenes never a del;
 He toke me certain gold, I wote it wel.
 What! evil thetome on his monkes shoute; **I3333**
 For God it wot I wend withouten doute
 That he had yeve it me becaufe of you;
 To don therewith min honour and my prou
 For cofinago and eke for *belle chere*
 That he hath had ful often times here; **I3340**
 But sith I see I stonde in swiche disjunt
 I wol answere you shortly to the point.

Ye have no flakke detours than am I;
 For I wol pay you wel and redily
 Fro day to day; and if so be I faille, **I3345**
 I am your wif! score it upon my taile,
 And I shal pay as sone as ever I may;
 For by my trouth I have on min array,
 And not in wafte, bestowed it every del:
 And for I have bestowed it so wel **I3350**
 For your honour, for Goddes sake I say
 As beth not wrothe, but let us laugh and play:
 Ye shal my joly body han to wedde;
 By God I n'ill not pay you but a-bedde:
 Foryeve it me, min owen spouse dere! **I3355**
 Turne hitherward, and maketh better chere.

This marchant saw ther was no remedy,
 And for to chide it n'ere but a foly,
 Sith that the thing may not amended be.
 Now wif, he said, and I foryeve it thee; **I3360**

But by thy lif he ne no more so large;
 Kepe bet my godd; this yeve I thee in charge.
 Thus endeth now my Tale, and God us sende
 Taling ynough unto our lives ende.

THE PRIORESSES PROLOGUE.

WEI said; by *corpus Domini*, quod our Hoste; 1336^e
 Now longe mote thou sailen by the coste,
 Thou gentil maister, gentil marinere.
 God give the monke a thousand last quad yere.
 A ha! felawes, beth ware of swiche a jape.
 The monke put in the marmes hode an ape, 1337^e
 And in his wifes eke, by Seint Austin.
 Draweth no monkes more into your in.

But now passe over, and let us seke aboute
 Who shal now tellen first of all this route
 Another Tale: and with that word he said, 1337^e
 As curteisly as it had ben a maid;

My Lady Prioress, by your leve,
 So that I wist I shuld you not agreve,
 I wolde demen that ye tellen shold
 A Tale next, if so were that ye wold. 1338^e
 Now wol ye vouchsauf, may Lady dere?
 Gladly, quod she; and saide as ye shul here.

†. 1336^e. *a thousand last quad yere*] *Last*, in Teut. is *onus*, *farcina*, Kilian; and *quod* in the same language is *malus*: the meaning therefore is, God give the monke *a thousand last* (ever so great a weight) of *quad yere* (bad years, misfortune.) The Italians use *mal anno* in the same sense.

THE PRIORESSES TALE

O Lord our Lord! thy name how merveilous
 Is in this large world ysprad! (quod she)
 For not al only thy laude precious 13385
 Parfourmed is by men of dignitee,
 But by the mouth of children thy bountee
 Parfourmed is, for on the brest souking
 Somtime shewen they thin herying.

Wherfore in laude, as I can best and may, 13390
 Of thee and of the white lily flour
 Which that thee bare, and is a maide alway,
 To tell a storie I wol do my labour;
 Not that I may encrefen hire honour,
 For she hireselven is honour and rote 13395
 Of bountee, next hire sone, and soules bote.

O mother maide! o maide and mother fre!
 O bushe unbrent! brenning in Moyfes light,
 That ravishedest down fro the deitee,
 Thurgh thin humbleffe, the gost that in thee alight,
 Of whos vertuc, whan he thin herte light, 13401

The Prioresses Tale] A miracle of a Christian child murdered by the Jews. *Urry*.

ψ. 13383. *O Lord our Lord*] The Prioress begins her legend with the first verses of the 8th psalm; "Domine, Dominus "nostrum," &c.

ψ. 13401. *whan he thin herte light*] i. e. Lighted, made light or pleasant. So in *Tro. b. iii. 1088.*;

Whan wroth is he that shold my sorrowes light.

Conceyved was the fathers sapience,
Helpe me to tell it in thy reverence.

Lady! thy bountie, thy magnificence,
Thy vertue and thy gret humilitee; 13405
Ther may no tongue expresse in no science;
Nor forntime, Lady! or men pray to thee
Thou goft beforne of thy benignitee
And getest us the light of thy prayere
To giden us unto thy fonde so dere: 13410

My pouering is le weke; o blisful Queene!
For to declare thy grette worthinesse;
That I ne may the weights not sustene;
But as a child of twelf month-old or lesse,
That can unanther any word expresse, 13415
Right so fare I, and therefore I you pray
Gideth my song that I shal of you say.

Ther was in Aste, in a gret citee,
Amonges Cristen folk a Jewerie, 13420
Sustened by a lord of that contree,
For foule usure and lucre of vilanie
Hateful to Crist and to his compaignie,
And thurgh the strete men mighten ride and wende,
For it was free, and open at eyther ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood 13425
Doun at the ferther end, in which ther were
Children an hepe comen of Cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yere by yere
Swiche manere doctrine as men used there;

This is to say, to singen and to rede,
As smale children dou in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widewe
A litel clergion, sevene yere of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,
And eke also, wheras he sey the image
Of Cristes moder, had he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun, and
Ave Marie as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widewe hire litel son
Our blisful Lady, Cristes moder dere,
To worship ay, and he forgate it naught
For sely childe wol alway sone lere.
But ay whan I remembre on this mater
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presenc
For he so yong to Crist did reverence.

This litel childe his litel book lerning
As he fate in the scole at his primere,
He *Alma Redemptoris* herde sing,
As children lered hir antiphonere,
And as he dorst he drow him nere and
And herkened ay the wordes and the
Til he the firste vers coude al by rote.

ψ. 13444. *Seint Nicholas*] We have an account of early piety of this saint in his lesson, *Brev. Rom.*
 "Cujus viri sanctitas, quanta futura esset, jam
 "apparuit. Nam infans, cum reliquis dies læt
 "fugeret, quartâ et sextâ feriâ (on *Wednesday*
 "semel duntaxat, idque vesperi, fugebat."

Nought with he what this Latin was to say,
 For he so yonge and tender was of age;
 But on a day his felaw gan he pray. 13455
 To expounden him this song in his langage,
 Or telle him why this song was in usage:
 This prayde he him to construe and declare:
 Ful often time upon his knees bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he, 13460
 Answerd him thus; This song, I have hard say,
 Was makid of our blisful Lady fre,
 Hire to salve, and eke hire for to prey
 To ben our help and socour whan we dey;
 I can no more expound in this matere. 13465
 I lerne song; I can but smal grammer.

And is this song makid in reverence
 Of Cristes moder? said this innocent:
 Now certes I wol don my diligence
 To conne it all or Cristemasse be went, 13470
 Though that I for my primer shal be shent,
 And shal be beten thries in an houre,
 I wol it conne our Ladie for to honoure.

His felaw taught him homeward prively
 Fro day to day til he coude it by rote, 13475
 And than he song it wel and boldely
 Fro word to word according with the note:
 Twies a day it passed thurgh his throte,
 To scoleward and homeward whan he wente;
 On Cristes moder set was his entente. 13480

As I have said, thurghout the Jewerie
This litel child, as he came to and fro,
Ful merily than wold he sing and crie
O Alma Redemptoris! ever mo.
The swetenesse hath his herte perfed so
Of Cristes moder, that to hire to pray
He cannot stint of singing by the way.

Our firste so, the serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
Up swale and said, O Ebraike peple, alas!
Is this to you a thing that is honest,
That swiche a boy shal walken as him leste
In your despit, and sing of swiche sentence,
Which is again our lawes reverence?

From thennesforth the Jewes han conspire
This innocent out of this world to chace:
An homicide therto han they hired,
That in an aleye had a privee place,
And as the child gan forthby for to pace
This cursed Jew him hent and held him fast
And cut his throte, and in a pit him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threwe
Wher as thise Jewes purgen hir entraille.
O cursed folk! of Herodes alle-newe,
What may your evil entente you availle?
Mordre wol out, certein it wol not faille;
And namely ther the honour of God shal sp
The blood out crieth on your cursed dede.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

I martyr fouled in vipers
 w maid thou finge and
 e while Lamb celestial
 which the great strange
 Pachmos wrote, with
 orn this Lamb, and
 t never dently upon
 his pure white
 r hire lital shade
 which as
 a face
 ath at
 nally the
 he last
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They sayden Nay; but Jelu of his grace
 Yave in hire thought, within a litel space,
 That in that place after hire sone she cride 131
 Ther he was casten in a pit beside.

O grets God, that performest thy laude
 By mouth of innocentes, lo here thy might!
 This gem of chastitee, this emeraude,
 And eke of martirdome the rubie bright, 132
 Ther he with throte ycorven lay upright
 He *Alma Redemptoris* gan to singe
 So loude, that all the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk that thurgh the strete wente
 In comen for to wendre upon this thing, 133
 And haillify they for the provost fente :
 He came anon withouten taryng,
 And herieth Crist, that is of heven king,
 And eke his moder, honour of mankind,
 And after that the Jewes let he binde. 134

This child with pitous lamentation
 Was taken up, singing his song alway,
 And with honour and gret procession
 They carien him unto the next abbey;
 His moder swouning by the bere lay : 135
 Unnethes might the peple that was there
 This newe Rachel bringen fro his bere.

With turment and with shameful deth eche o
 This provost doth thise Jewes for to sterve
 That of this morder wiste, and that anon : 136

He n'olde no swiche cursednesse observe:
 Evil shal he have that evil wol deserve;
 'Therfore with wilde hors he did hem drawe,
 And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

Upon his bere ay lith this innocent 13565
 Beforn the auter while the masse last,
 And after that the abbot with his covent
 Han spedde hem for to berie him ful fast;
 And whan they holy water on him cast
 Yet spake this child, whan spreint was the holy water,
 And sang *O Alma Redemptoris Mater!* 13571

This abbot, which that was an holy man,
 As monkes ben, or elles ought to be,
 This yonge child to conjure he began,
 And said; O dere child! I halfe thee, 13575
 In vertue of the holy trinitee,
 Tell me what is thy cause for to sing,
 Sith that thy throte is cut to my feming.

My throte is cut unto my nekke bon,
 Saide this child, and as by way of kinde 13580
 I shuld have deyed, ye longe time agon,

✧. 13575. *I halfe thee*] *Mss. A. B.* 1, 2, read *I conjure thee*—
 but that seems to be a gloss. *To halfe* signifies properly to em-
 brace round the neck, from the Sax. *hals*, the neck. [See ver.
 10253.] So in *C. L.* ver. 1290.;

I hand and speke, and laugh, and kisse, and *halfe*.
 It signifies also to salute, *P. P.* fol. 22.;

I halfe hym heudlich, as I his frende were.

And fol. 39, to salute with reverence;

And the eleven sterres *halfed* him all—

which seems to be the sense here.

But Jesu crist, as ye in bookes finde,
 Wol that his glory last and be in minde,
 And for the worship of his moder dere
 Yet may I sing *O Alma* loude and clere. 13585

This welles of mercie, Cristes moder swete,
 I loved alway, as after my conning;
 And whan that I my lif shulde forlete
 To me she came, and bad me for to sing
 This antem veraily in my dying, 13590
 As ye han herde; and whan that I had songe
 Me thought she laid a grain upon my tonge.

Wherefore I sing, and sing I mote certain,
 In honour of that blisful maiden free,
 'Til fro my tonge of taken is the grain. 13595
 And after that thus saide she to me;
 My litel child, than wol I fetchen thee,
 Whan that the grain is fro thy tonge ytake:
 Be not agaste, I wol thee not forsake

This holy monk, this abbot him mene I, 13600
 His tonge out caught, and toke away the grain,
 And he yave up the goft ful softely.
 And whan this abbot had this wonder feyn
 His swete teres trilled adoun as reyne,
 And groff he fell al platte upon the ground, 13605
 And still he lay as he had ben ybound.

[13597. *than wol I fetchen thee*] The best mss. read *now*, which is scarce reconcileable to any rules of speech. Even with this exception, which I have adepcted there is a greater confusion in this narration than I recollect to have observed in any other of Chaucer's *Romances*.

The covent lay eke upon the pavement
 Weping and herying Cristes moder dere;
 And after that they risen, and forth ben went,
 And toke away this martir fro his bere, 13610
 And in a tombe of marble stones clere
 Enclosen they his litel body swete:
 Ther he is now God leue us for to mete.

O yonge Hew of Lincoln! slain also
 With cursed Jewes, as it is notable, 13615
 For it n'is but a litel while ago,
 Pray eke for us, we sinful folk unstable,
 That of his mercy God so merciabie
 On us his grete mercie multiplie,
 For reverence of his moder Marie. 13620

PROLOGUE TO SIRE THOPAS.

WHAN said was this miracle every man
 As sober was that wonder was to see,
 Til that our Hoste to jopen he began,
 And than at erst he loket upon me,
 And saide thus; What man art thou? quod he:
 Thou lokest as thou woldest find an hare, 13626
 For ever upon the ground I see thee stare.

Approche nere, and loke up merrily.
 Now ware you, Sires, and let this man have place;
 He in the walle is shapen as wel as I. 13630

ψ. 13623. *to jopen he began*] So ms. E.; some mss. read —
the began.

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS.

This were a popet in an arme to embrace
 For any woman, smal and faire of face.
 He semeth elvish by his countenance,
 For unto no wight doth he daliance.
 Say now somwhat, sin other folk han faide:
 Tell us a Tale of mirthe, and that anon.
 Hoste, quod I, ne be not evil apaide,
 For other Tale certes can I non.
 But of a rime I lerned yore agon.
 Ye, that is good, quod he; we shullen here
 Sem deintee thing me thinketh by thy chere

THE RIME OF SIRE THOPAS.

LISTENETH, Lordinges, in good entente
 And I wol tel you *verament*
 Of mirthe and of folas,
 Al of a knight was faire and gent
 In bataille and in tournament,
 His name was Sire Thopas.
 Yborne he was in fer contree,
 In Flandres, al beyonde the see,
 At Popering in the place:
 His father was a man ful free,

The Rime of Sire Thopas] A northern T.
 knight, purposely uttered by Chaucer in
 ferre from the rest, as though he himself
 but only the reporter of the other Tales.

¶. 13650. *A: Popering*] Popering or Pop-
 land was once Rector of it. Tanner, Bibl

And lord he was of that contree,
As it was Goddes grace.

Sire Thopas was a doughty swain,
White was his face as paindemaine, 13655
His lippes red as rose:
His rudde is like scarlet in grain,
And I you tell in good certain
He had a femely nose.

His here, his berde, was like safroun, 13660
That to his girdle raught adoun;
His shoon of Cordewane;
Of Brugges were his hosen broun;
His robe was of chekelatoun,
That coste many a Jane. 13665

✧. 13655. *paindemaine*] That this must have been a sort of remarkably white bread is clear enough. Skinner derives it from *panis matutinus*, *pain de matin*; and indeed Du Cange mentions a species of loaves or rolls called *Matinelli*. However, I am more inclined to believe that it received its denomination from the province of Maine, where it was perhaps made in the greatest perfection. I find it twice in a northern tale called *The Freiris of Berwick*, ms. *Maitland*;

And als that creil is full of breid of Mane.
And again—the *Maine breid*.

✧. 13664. *chekelatoun*] The glossaries suppose this word to be compounded of *cheke* and *latoun*, a species of base metal like gold; but it seems rather to be merely a corruption of the Fr. *ciclaton*, which originally signified a circular robe of state, from the Gr. Lat. *cyclas*, and afterwards the cloth of gold of which such robes were generally made. *Du Cange*, in *v Cyclas*, has produced instances enough of both senses. In fact several mss. read *ciclaton*; and I have no excuse for not having followed them but that I was misled by the authority of Spenser, as quoted by Mr. Warton, *Obs. on Sp.* v. i. p. 194. Upon further consideration I think it is plain that Spenser was mistaken in the

He coude hunt at the wilde dere,
 And ride on hauking for the riwere
 With grey gofhawk on honde;
 Therto he was a good archere:
 Of wraßling was ther non his pere
 Ther ony ram shuld stonde.

Ful many a maide bright in hour
 They mourned for him *par amour*
 Whan hem were bet to slepe;
 But he was chaste and no lechour,
 And swete as is the bramble flour
 That bereth the red hepe.

And so it fell upon a day,
 Forsoth, as I you tellen may,
 Sire Thopas wold out ride;
 He worth upon his flede gray,
 And in his hond a launcegay,
 A long sward by his side.

very foundation of his notion, "that the quilted robe of *becklaton*" had any resemblance to the robe of *becklaton*." He supposes that Chaucer had Sir Thopas as he went to fight against the king of *becklaton*; whereas, on the contrary, it is Thopas is here described in his usual habit in his warlike apparel, when he goes to fight against the king of *becklaton*, ver. 13786, and foll. and is described below, ver. 13786, and foll. and is ver. 13665. *a Jane*] A coin of Janua, (Ge. statutes galley halfpence. See the quotation in Warton's *Olf. on Spens.* v. i. p. 180.

ver. 13667. *banking for the riwere*] See the note to ver. 13671. *Ther ony ram*] See the note to ver. 13682. *a launcegay*] The edit. have

into two words, as if *gay* were an epithet.

All other women I forsake,
 And to an elf quene I me take
 By dale and eke by doon. 13725

Into his fadel he clombe anon,
 And priked over stile and ston
 An elf quene for to espie,
 Til he so long had riden and gone
 That he fond in a privee wone 13730
 The contree of Faerie.

Wherin he foughte north and south,
 And oft he spied with his mouth

cing the rhyme which answers to them, or whether some lines which originally connected them with the context have been lost it is not easy to determine. Upon the latter supposition, which I confess appears to me the most probable, we may imagine that in the present instance the three last lines of this stanza and the three first of the following (except the words *in town*) have dropped out: in the three other instances only two lines and the two first feet of the third may be supposed to be wanting. — In support of this hypothesis it may be observed, that in the very next stanza the last line, ver. 13731, and the following line, in ms. C. 1, stand thus;

The contree of Faerie so wilde,
 For in that contree n'as ther non
 [That to him durst ride or gon]
 Neither wil ne childe.

Whether the two lines and part of another which I have inserted before *toille* from other mss. be genuine I will not be positive, but it is very clear, I think, that something is wanting. The line between hooks, which is inserted in ms. C. 1, in a later hand, is in ms. *HL. D.*

✧. 13733. *he spied*] Ed. *Urr.* reads *spired*, I know not upon what authority; but the emendation is probable enough, as the expression of *spying with the mouth* seems to be too extravagantly absurd even for this composition. To *spise* or *spere*. Gl. *Doug.* signifies to inquire, from the Sax. *spyrjan*. See P. L. p. 327. *Gower, Conf. Amant.* fol. 182.

The throftel cok made eke his lay,
 The wode dove upon the spray
 He fang ful loude and clere.

Sire Thopas fell in love-longing
 Al whan he herd the throftel fong,
 And priked as he were wood;
 His faire ftede in his priking
 So fwatte that men might him wring,
 His fides were al blood.

Sire Thopas eke so wery was
 For priking on the foſte gras,
 So fiers was his corage,
 That doun he laid him in that place
 To maken his ftede ſom ſolace,
 And yaf him good forage.

A, Seinte Mary, *benedicite* !
 What aileth this Love at me
 To binde me ſo fore ?
 Me dremed all this night parde
 An elf quene ſhal my lemman be,
 And flepe under my gore.

An elf quene wol I love ywis,
 For in this world no woman is
 Worthy to be my make ¶ in toun——

¶. 13722. ¶ *in toun*] Theſe two laſt words, which ſuperfluous, are diſtinguiſhed by a mark of this C. 1, and the ſame mark is repeated in ver. 13743, 13815, where the two final ſyllables are alſo ſuperfluous. Whether in all theſe caſes the words thus ſet off be conſidered as idle additions, for the purpoſe

All other women I forsake,
 And to an elf quene I me take
 By dale and eke by doon. 13725
 Into his fadel he clombe anon,
 And priked over stile and ston
 An elf quene for to espie,
 Til he so long had riden and gone
 That he fond in a privee wone 13730
 The contree of Faerie.

Wherin he foughte north and south,
 And oft he spied with his mouth
 cing the rhyme which answers to them, or whether some lines
 which originally connected them with the context have been
 lost it is not easy to determine. Upon the latter supposition,
 which I confess appears to me the most probable, we may ima-
 gine that in the present instance the three last lines of this stanza
 and the three first of the following (except the words *in town*)
 have dropped out: in the three other instances only two lines
 and the two first feet of the third may be supposed to be want-
 ing.——In support of this hypothesis it may be observed, that
 in the very next stanza the last line, ver. 13735, and the fol-
 lowing line, in ms. C. 1, stand thus;

The contree of Faerie so wilde,
 For in that contree n'as ther non
 [That to him durst ride or gon]
 Neither wif ne childe.

Whether the two lines and part of another which I have in-
 serted before *wilde* from other mss. be genuine I will not be
 positive, but it is very clear, I think, that something is want-
 ing. The line between hooks, which is inserted in ms. C. 1, in
 a later hand, is in ms. *HLA. D.*

♀. 13733. *be spied*] Ed. *Urr.* reads *spired*, I know not upon
 what authority; but the emendation is probable enough, as
 the expression of *spying with the mouth* seems to be too extra-
 vagantly absurd even for this composition. To *spire* or *spere*.
 Gl. *Doog* signifies to inquire, from the Sax. *spyrjan*. See P. L.
 p. 327. *Gower, Conf. Amant.* fol. 182.

tree n'as ther non
orft ride or gon,
e childe.
er came a gret geaunt,
as Sire Oliphant,
nen of dede;
hild, by Termagaunt
prike out of myn haunt
thy ftede || with mace—
e Quene of Facrie,
pe, and pipe, and fimphonie,
in this place.

13735

13740

13745

9. Sire Oliphant] Sir Elephant, a proper name for
Andeville, p. 283. "And there ben also many wyde
and nameliche of olyfauntet." The very learned and
author of Letters on Chivalry. &c. supposes "that
ke of The Giant Oliphant and Chylde Thopas was not
on of Chaucer's own, but a story of antique fame, and
celebrated in the days of chivalry." I can only say that
not been so fortunate as to meet with any traces of such
of an earlier date than The Canterbury Tales.
3741. by Termagaunt] This Saracen deity in an old ro-
c. ms. Bod. 1624, is constantly called *Tervagan*;
De deyant sci fait porter son dragon,
E l'estendart *Tervagan* e Mahum,
E un ymagene *Apollin* le felon.

again;
Fleignent lur deus *Tervagan* et Mahum,
E *Apollin*, dunt il ont rien ont.

a romance, which in the ms. has no title, may possibly be
older copy of one which is frequently quoted by Du Cange
under the title of *Le Roman de Ronceveaux*. The author's name
as *Turold*, as appears from the last line;

Ci fait le geste que *Turold* declinet.
is not mentioned by any of the writers of French literary
story that I have seen.

The child sayd, Al so mote I the
 To morwe wol I meten thee,
 Whan I have min armoure,
 And yet I hope *par ma foy* 13750
 That thou shalt with this hwncegay
 Abien it ful soure ¶: thy mawe
 Shal I perce, if I may,
 Or it be fully prime of the day,
 For here thou shalt be slawe. 13755

Sire Thopas drew abak ful fast;
 This geaunt at him stones cast
 Out of a fel staffe sling:
 But faire escaped child Thopas,
 And all it was thurgh Goddes grace, 13760
 And thurgh his faire bering.

Yet listneth, Lordings, to my Tale,
 Merier than the nightingale,
 For now I wol you rounce
 How Sire Thopas with fides smale, 13765
 Priking over hill and dale,
 Is comen agein to toune.

His mery men commandeth he
 To maken him bothe game and gle,
 For nedes must he fighte 13770
 With a geaunt with hedes three
 For paramour and jolitee
 Of on that shone ful brighte.

¶ 13758. *a fel staffe sling*] This is the reading of the best mss.
 but what kind of sling is meant I know not. See *Gloss.* in v.
Staffling.

Do come, he sayd, my minestrales
 And gessours for to tellen tales
 Anon in min arming,
 Of romaunces that ben reales,
 Of popes and of cardinales,
 And eke of love-longing.

13775

¶ 13775. *gessours for to tellen tales*] The proper business of a *gessour* was to recite tales or jests, which was only one of the branches of the minstrel's profession.—— *Minstrels* and *gessours* are mentioned together in the following lines, from William of Nassington's translation of a religious treatise by John of Walby, ms. Reg. 17 C. viii. p. 2.;

I warne you furth at the begynnyng
 That I will make no vain carpiage
 Of cedes of armys ne of smours,
 As dus mynstrales and gessours,
 That makye carpiage in many a place
 Of Octoviane and Isembrase,
 And of many other jestes,
 And namely when they come to festes,
 Ne of the life of Bevyys of Hampton,
 That was a knight of gret renous,
 Ne of Sir Gye of Warwyke,
 All if it might sum men lyke.——

I cite these lines to shew the species of tales related by the ancient *gessours*, and how much they differed from what we now call *jest*s.

¶ 13777. *Of romaunces that ben reales*] So in the *Rom. of Ywain and Gawain*, ms. Cott. Galb. E. ix.;

He fund a knight under a tre;
 Upon a cloth of gold he lay;
 Byfor him sat a ful fayr may;
 A lady sat with tham in fere;
 The maiden red, that thal might here
 A real romance in that place.——

The original of this title, which is an uncommon one, I take to have been this: when the French romances found their way into Italy, (not long before the year 1300, *Crescimb.* t. i. p. 336,) some Italian undertook to collect together all those relating to Charlemagne and his family, and to form them into a regular *body of history*. The six first books of this work come down to

They fet him first the swete win, 13780
 And mede eke in a maselin
 And real spicerie,
 Of ginger-bred that was ful fin,
 And licoris and eke comin,
 With suger that is trie. 13785

He didde next his white lere
 Of cloth of lake fin and clere
 A breche and eke a sherte,

the death of Pepin. They begin thus ; " Qui se comenza la historia el Real di Franza comenzando a Constantino Imperatore Secondo molte lezende che lo ho attrovate e raccolte in fieme." Edit. *Mutine*, 1491, fol. It was reprinted in 1537 under this title ; " *I reali di Pranza*, nel quale si contiene la generazione di tutti i Re, Duchl, Principi e Baroni di Franza, e delli Paladini, colle battaglie da loro fatte," *Gr. Quadrio*, t. vi. p. 530. Salviati had seen a ms. of this work written about 1350, [*Crescim.* t. i. p. 330,] and I do not believe that any mention of a *real* (or *royal*) *romance* is to be found in French or English prior to that date.

★. 13786. *He didde next his white lere*] He did, or put, on next his white skin. *To don* (*do on*) and *doff* (*do off*) have been in use as vulgar words long since Chaucer's time. *Lere* seems to be used for skin in *Isambas*, ms. *Cott. Cal.* 11, fol. 129. ;

His lady is white as wales bone,
 Here *lere* brygte to se upon,
 So faire as bloume on tre—

though it more commonly signifies only what we call complexion.—In the romance of *Li Beau Desconus* his arming is thus described, fol. 42. ;

They caste on him a scherte of felk,
 A gypell as white as melk
 In that femely sale,
 And syt an hawberk brygt,
 That richel, was adygt
 With maylles thykke and smale.—

And next his shert an haketoun,
 And over that an habergeon
 For percing of his herte;

13790

And over that a fin hauberk
 Was all ywrought of jewes werk,
 Ful strong it was of plate,
 And over that his cote-armoure,
 As white as is the lily floure,
 In which he wold debate.

13795

His sheld was all of gold so red,
 And therin was a bores hed,
 A charbounle beside;
 And ther he swore on ale and bred
 How that the geaunt shuld be ded,
 Betide what so betide.

13800

His jambeux were of cuirbouly,
 His swerdes sheth of ivory,

13805

†. 13793. *of Jewes werk*] I do not recollect to have seen the Jews celebrated any where as remarkable artificers; I am therefore inclined to adopt an explanation of this word which I find in a note of the learned editor of *Ancient Scottish Poems*, p. 230.; "This *jow*, not this Jew, but this juggler or magician. The words to *jowk*, to deceive, and *jowkery-pawky*, "juggling tricks, are still in use. In Lord Hyndford's ms. p. 136, "there is a fragment of a sort of fairy tale, where *Sebo is the* " *queene of jowis* means She is the queen of magicians."—According to this explanation *Jewes werke* may signify the work of magicians or fairies.

†. 13800. *A charbounle*] *A carbuncle* (*escarboucle*, Fr.) was a common bearing. *Guillim's Heraldry*, p. 109.

†. 13804. *cuirbouly*] *Cuir bouilli*, of which Sir Topas's boots were made, was also applied to many other purposes. See *Prois*. v. i. c. 110, 120, and v. iv. c. 19. In this last passage he says

His helme of latoun bright,
 His sadel was of rewel bone,
 His bridel as the sonne shone,
 Or as the mone light.

His spere was of fin cypres, 13810

That bodeth werre and nothing pees,

The hed ful sharpe yground:

His stede was all dapple gray,

It goth an aumble in the way

Ful softely and round || in londe—— 13815

Lo, Lordes min, here is a fit,

If ye wol ony more of it

To telle it wol I fond.

Now hold your mouth *pour charitee*

Bothe knight and lady fre, 13820

And herkeneth to my spell;

Of bataille and of chevalrie,

Of ladies love and druerie,

Anon I wol you tell.

the Saracens covered their targes with "*cuir bouilli d'ours*" "*doce*, ou nul fer ne peut prendre n'attacher; si le cuir n'est trop échauffé."

✧. 13807. *rewel bone*] What kind of material this was I profess myself quite ignorant. In the *Turnam. of Tottenham*, ver. 75, [*Anc. Poet.* v. ii. p. 18.] Tibby is introduced with a garland on her head full of *ruell bones*. The derivation in Gloss. *Turn.* of this word from the Fr. *riolé*, diversly coloured, has not the least probability. The other, which deduces it from the Fr. *rotula*, *rotula*, the whirrhone or kneecap, is more plausible, though, as the glossarist observes, that sense will hardly suit here.

✧. 13823. *Of la lies love and druerie?*] I have taken the *de*xy here of departing from the mē, which read——
 And of ladies love druerie.

Men speken of romaunces of pris,
 Of Hornchild and of Ipotis,
 Of Bevis and Sire Guy,
 Of Sire Libeux and Pleindamour,
 But Sire Thopas he bereth the flour
 Of real chevalrie.

His goode stede he al bestrode,
 And forth upon his way he glode
 As sparcle out of bronde;
 Upon his creft he bare a tour,
 And therin stiked a lily flour;
 God shilde his corps fro shonde!

Upon second thoughts I am more inclined to
 as a gloss for *druerie*, and to read thus;

And of ladies druerie.

Druerie is strangely explained in Gloss. *Urr.*
 it means courtship, gallantry.

¶ 13828. *Of Sire Libeux*] His romance is
 In the 12th stanza we have his true name as
 King Arthur speaks;

Now clepeth him alle thus,
Ly Beau Defenus,
 For the love of me,
 Thou may se wete arowe,
I be fayre unknowne
 Certes so hatte he.

Ibid. Pleindamour] This is the reading of
 not why we should change it for *Blandan*
 found equally well.

¶ 13833. *As sparcle*] The same simi
 130, b.;

He spronge forth, as sparke on (f. of
Glode in the preceding verse is probably
 from the Sax. *glowan, candere.*

AND THE ASTOR LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
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Min eres aken of thy draffy speche.
 Now swiche a rime the devil I beteche;
 This may wel be rime dogerel; quod he.

Why so? quod I; why wolt thou letten me
 More of my Tale than an other man, 13855
 Sin that it is the beste rime I can?

By God, quod he, for plainly at o word
 Thy draffy riming is not worth a rotd:
 Thou dost nought elles but dispendest time.
 Sire, at o word thou shalt no longer rime. 13860
 Let see wher thou canst tellen ought in geste,
 Or tellen in prose somewhat at the leste

†. 13852. *the devil I beteche*] I betake (recounted or give)
 to the devil. See ver. 3748.

My soules betake I unto Sathanas—

and ver. 8037, 17256, where the preposition is omitted as here.
To take, in our old language, is also used for *to take to*, *to give*.
 See ver. 13334.

He *take* me certain gold, I wote it wel.

And compare ver. 13224, 13286.—The change of *betake* into
beteche was not so great a license formerly as it would be now,
 as *eb* and *k* seem once to have been pronounced in nearly the same
 manner. See ver. 3307, 8, 11, 12, where *werk* is made to rhyme
 to *berche* and *clerk*. It may be observed too that the Saxons
 had but one verb, *tæcan*, to signify *capere* and *docere*; and
 though our ancestors, even before Chaucer's time, had split
 that single verb into two, *to take* and *to teche*, and had distin-
 guished each from the other by a different mode of inflexion,
 yet the compound verb *betake*, which according to that mode
 of inflexion ought to have formed its past time *betoke*, formed
 it often, I believe, *betaught*, as if no such distinction had been
 established. See K. R. ver. 4438.; *Gamelyn*, 666. The regular
 past time *leteche* occurs in ver. 16009.

In which ther be som mirths or som doctrine.

Gladly, quod I; by Goddes swete pine

I wol you tell a litel thing in prose 13865

That oughte likes you, as I suppose,

Or elles certes ye be to dangerous.

It is a moral Tale virtuous,

Al be it told somtime in sondry wise

Of sondry folk, as I shal you devise. 13870

As thus; ye wot that every evangelist

That telleth us the peine of Jesu Crist

Ne saith not alle thing as his scholar doth;

But natheles hir sentence is al soth;

And alle accorden as in hir sentence, 13875

Al be ther in hir telling difference;

For som of hem say more and som say lesse

Whan they his pitous passion expresse;

I mene of Mark and Mathew, Luke and John,

But douteles hir sentence is all on. 13880

Therefore, Lordinges all, I you beseeche,

If that ye thinke I vary in my speche,

As thus, though that I telle som del more

Of proverbes than ye han herde before

Comprehended in this litel tretise here, 13885

To enforcen with the effect of my matere,

And though I not the same wordes say

As ye han herde, yet to you alle I pray

v. 13879. *I mene of Mark and Mathew*] The conjunction *and* has been added for the sake of the metre without authority, and perhaps without necessity, as *Mark* was probably written by Chaucer *Marke*, and pronounced as a dissyllable.

Blameth me not, for as in my sentence
 Shul ye nowher finden no difference 13890
 Fro the sentence of thilke tretise lite
 After the which this mery Tale I write;
 And therfore herkeneth what I shal say,
 And let me tellen all my Tale I pray. 13894

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

A Yongeman called Melibeus, mighty and riche, begate upon his wif that called was Prudence a daughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a day befell that he for his disport is went into the felde him to playe. His wif and eke his doughter hath he left within his hous, of which the doores weren fast yshette. Foure of his olde foes han it espied, and setten ladders to the walles of his hous, and by the windowes ben entred, and beten his wif, and wounded his doughter with five mortal woundes in five sondry places; this is to say, in hire feet, in hire hondes, in hire eres, in hire nose, and in hire mouth, and lesten hire for dede, and wenten away.

The Tale of Melibeus] Prudence, the discreet wife of Melibeus, persuadeth her husband to patience, and to receive his enemies to mercie and grace. A Tale full of moralitie, wherein both high and low may learne to governe their affections. *Speght*.

The Tale of Melibeus] Mr. Thomas has observed that this Tale seems to have been written in blank verse. [*Mss. notes upon Ch. ed. U. r. in Brit. Mus.*] It is certain that in the former part of it we find a number of blank verses intermixed in a much greater proportion than in any of our Author's other prose writings, but this poetical style is not, I think, remarkable beyond the first four or five pages.

Melibeus retourned was into his hous, and
 as meschief, he like a madman rending his
 an to wepe and crie.

nce his wif, as fer forth as she dorste, besought
 is weping for to flint : but not forthy he gan
 id wepen ever lenger the more.

oble wif Prudence remembred hire upon the
 of Ovide*, in his book that cleped is The Re-
 Love, wheras he saith, He is a fool that di-
 the moder to wepe in the deth of hire childe
 ve wept hire fille, as for a certain time; and
 a man don his diligence with amiable wordes
 confort, and preye hire of hire weping for
 For which reson this noble wif Prudence suf-
 housbond for to wepe and crie as for a cer-
 e, and whan she saw hire time she sayde to
 his wife : Alas ! my Lord, quod she, why make
 elf for to be like a fool ? forsothe it appertein-
 to a wise man to maken swiche a forwe.
 oughter with the grace of God shal warish
 be. And al were it so that she right now were
 ne ought not as for hire deth youreself to de-

mentis of Ovide] Rem. Am. 125. ;

*matrem, nisi mentis inops, in funere nati
 vetet ? &c.*

e a laborious and thankless task to point out the exact
 all the quotations which are made use of in this trea-
 therefore confine my observations of that kind to
 ges, which are taken from authors not commonly to
 th.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

Senek saith, The wise man shal not take to
discomfort for the deth of his children, but certes
shulde suffren it in patience, as wel as he abideth
deth of his owen propre persone.
This Melibeus answered anon and saide; What
an (quod he) shulde of his weping stinte that hath
gret a cause for to wepe? Jesu Crist our Lord him-
self wepte for the deth of Lazarus his frend. Prudent
answered; Certes wel I wote attempre weping is no-
thing defended to him that sorweful is among folk in
forwe, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. Ther
possible Poule unto the Romaines writeth, Man sh
rejoyce with hem that maken joye, and wepen w
swiche folk as wepen. But though attempre we
be ygranted, outrageous weping certes is dese
Mesure of weping shulde be considered after th
that techeth us Senek. Whan that thy frend
(quod he) let not thin eyen to moiste ben of
to muche drie; although the teres comen to t
let hem not falle. And whan thou hast so
frend do diligence to get agein another fr
this is more wisdom than for to wepe for
which that thou hast lorne, for therein is ne
therfore if ye governe you by sapience put
out of youre herte. Remembreth you tha
sayth, A man that is joyous and glad in
conserueth flourishing in his age; but so
ful herte maketh his bones drie. He f

it forwe in herte fleeth ful many a man. Salomon
 th, that right as monthes in the shepes fleete anaien
 the clothea, and the smale wormes to the tree, right
 anaieth forwe to the herte of man; wherfore us
 ght as wel in the deth of oure children as in the losse
 oure goodes temporel have patience.

Remember you upon the patient Job; whan he hadde
 his children and his temporel substance, and in
 body endured and received ful many a grevous tri-
 ation, yet sayde he thus; Oure Lord hath yeve it
 me, oure Lord hath beraft it me; right as oure
 rd hath wold right so is it don; ybleffed be the
 ne of oure Lord. To this foresaide thinges answer-
 Melibæus unto his wif Prudence: All thy wordes
 (od he) ben trewe, and therto profitable, but trewe-
 main herte is troubled with this forwe so greuously
 it I n'ot what to don. Let calle (quod Prudence)
 in trewe frendes alle. and thy linage, which that ben
 se, and telleth to hem your cas, and herkeneth what
 y saye in conseilling, and governe you after hir sen-
 ce. Salomon faith, Werke all thinges by conseil and
 ou shak never repente.

Than by conseil of his wif Prudence this Melibæus
 callen a gret congregation of folk. as surgens,
 ificiens, olde folk and yonge, and som of his olde
 emies reconciled (as by hir semblant) to his love and
 his grace; and therwithal ther comen some of his
 igheboures that diden him reverence more for drede
Volume IV.

THE TALE OF MELIBEUS.

er love, as it happeth oft: ther comen also fel
subtil flaterers, and wise advocats, lerned in the

and whan thise folk togeder assembled weren this
libeus in sorweful wise shewed hem his cas, and
the manere of his speche it semed that in herte he
re a cruel ire, ready to don vengeance upon his
mos, and sodeinly desired that the werre shulde be-
ginne, but natheles yet axed he his conseil upon this
matere. A furgien, by licence and assent of swiche as
weren wise, up rose, and unto Melibeus sayde as ye
moun here.

Sire, (quod he) as to us furgiens apperteineth if
we do to every wight the beste that we can, wher
hen withholden, and to our patieat that we do n
mage, wherfore it happeth many time and oft
whan twey men han everich wounded other
furgien heleth hem both, wherfore unto our
not pertinent to norice werre, ne parties to se
but certes us to the warishing of youre dou
be it so that perilously she be wounded, we f
contentif besnesse fro day to night, that wil
of God ing. shal be hole and sound as sone a
Almost right in the same wise the phisici
den, save that they saiden a fewe worde
right as maladies ben cured by hir contr
that man warishe werre. His neighebour
husband, frendes that semed reconciled

ers, madden semblant of weping, and empeired and aggreghed muchel of this matere, in preyng gretly Melibee of might, of power, of richesse, and of frendes, despising the power of his adversaries, and saiden out-
rely that he anon shulde wreken him on his foos, and
beginnen werre.

Up rose than an advocat that was wise, by leve and
by conseil of other that were wise, and sayde; Lord-
inges, the nede for the which we ben assembied in this
place is a ful hevie thing, and an heigh matere, be-
cause of the wrong and of the wikkednesse that hath
be don, and eke by reson of the grete damages that in
time coming ben possible to fallen for the same cause,
and eke by reson of the gret richesse and power of the
parties bothe, for the which resons it were a ful gret
peril to erren in this matere; wherfore, Melibeus, this
is oure sentence: we conseille you, aboven alle thing,
that right anon thou do thy diligence in keping of thy
propre persone in swich a wise that thou ne want non
espie ne watche thy body for to save; and after that
we conseille that in thin hous thou sette suffisant gar-
nison, so that they moun as wel thy body as thy hous
defende: but certes for to meeven werre, ne sodenly
for to do vengcaunce, we moun not deme in so litel
time that it were profitable; wherfore we axen leifer
and space to have deliberation in this cas to deme; for
the comune proverbe saith thus, He that sone demeth
sone shal repente; and eke men sain that thilke juge

THE TALE OF MELIPRUS.

that sone understandeth a matere and
is: for al be it so that al taryng be
it is not to reprove in yeving of
engance taking, whan it is sufficient
that shewed our Lord Jesu Crist by
nan that the woman that was taken in
as brought in his presence, to knowen wh
on with hire persone, al be it that he wil
self what that he wolde answer, yet he w
answere sodeinly, but he wolde have delibe
in the ground he wrote twies: and by thi
axen deliberation, and we shuln than by
God conseille the thing that shal be prof

Upsterte than the yonge folk at ones,
partie of that compaignie han scorned
man, and begonnen to make noise, and
so as while that iren is hot men shulde
men shuln do wreken hir wronges whi
freshe and newe: and with loude v
Werre! werre! Up rose tho on of thi
with his hand made countenance
holde hem stille and yeve him and
(quod he) ther is ful many a man t
werre! that wote ful litel what
Werre at his beginning hath so
so large, that every wight may en
and lightly find werre; but certe
befalle it is not light to know;
werre is ones begonne there i

of his moder that shal sterue yong by cause of werre, other elles live in forwe, and dien in nednesse; and therefore or that any werre be hemmen must have gret conseil and gret delibera- and whan this olde man wende to enforcen his refons, wel nie alle at ones begonne they to breken his tale, and bidden him ful oft his for to abregge; for sothly he that precheth to at listen not heren his wordes his sermon hem; for Iesus Sirak sayth that musike in weping ious thing; this is to sayn, as muche availleth be beforn folk to which his speche anoiethe as to reforme him that wepeth. And whan this wise w that him wanted audience al shamefast he im doun agein; for Salomon saith, Ther as thou st have non audience enforce thee not to speke. el (quod this wise man) that the comune prosoth, that good conseil wanteth whan it is most

had this Melibeus in his conseil many folk that in his ere conseilled him certain thing, and led him the contrary in general audience. Whan us had herd that the grettest partie of his counre accorded that he shulde make werre, anon ented to hire conseilling, and fully affirmed hire. Than Danie Prudence, whan that she saw at hire hosbonde shope him for to awreke him foos, and to beginne werre, she in ful humble

wife, whan she saw hire time, saye...

My Lord, (quod she) I you beseeche, as hertly as
and can, ne haste you not to falle, and for alle gu
as yeve me audience; for Piers Alphonse † sayth

† *Piers Alphonse*] He calls himself *Petrus Alfonsi* in hi
gus contra Judeos, ms. Harl. 3861. He there informs us
was himself originally a Jew, but converted and baptize
year 1106, in July, *die natalis App. Petri et Pauli*, upon
account he took the name of *Peter*; "Fuit autem pater
"spiritualis *Alfonsus*, gloriosus Hispanie Imperator," (King of Aragon of that name and the seventh of Castile)
"quare, nomen ejus prefato nomini meo apponens, *Petrus*
"jussit mihi nomen imponi." After his conversion is
the dialogue above-mentioned, and also another work
is here quoted by Chaucer, and of which therefore I th
self obliged to give some account.—It is extant in m
libraries, but the only copy which I have had an op
of examining is in the Museum, *Bib. Reg. 10 B. xii.*:
entitled *Petri Alfonsi de Clericali disciplina*, and he
"Dixit Petrus Alfonsus, servus composuit
"hunc—Libellum compegi partim ex proverbii
"libris Arabicis et fabulis et versibus, et partim ex
"et volucrium similitudinibus."—After a short p
ters thus upon his main subject; "Et igitur phi
"In qua Arabice cognominatur *Fideli*, dixit filius
"Domini sit tua negotiatio," &c.—The work
in the form of a dialogue between the philosopher
The precepts of the former are for the

so that doth to thee outhur good or harme haste thee
not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and

brated collection of oriental apologues.——In this part of the world, however, Alfonsus may be considered as an original writer. His work was very early translated into French verse. In an old copy, *ms. Reg. 16 E. viii.* the translation is entitled *Proverbes Peres Anforse*; and there is a short introduction by the translator, in which he says, “Voil *Peres Anfors* translator.”——In a later copy, *ms. Bod. 1687*, the introduction is omitted, but the poem is entitled *Le Romanz Peres Anfour coment il aprist et chastia son filz belement*.—In another copy, *ms. Harl. 4388*, there is neither introduction nor title, so that by the mere omissions of transcribers the French translation has put on the appearance of an original work, and is quoted as such by M. le

hare is not in that copy of Symeon's translation which Starkius has printed under the title of *Specimen Sapientie Indiarum*, Berlin 1697, 8vo, but it is in *ms. Bod. 510*, and in the Lat. version of Symeon's book which Poulain published by way of Appendix to the history of Pachymerus, *Inter Script. Hist. Byzant.* The various titles under which this eastern romance has passed through Europe may be seen in the preface of Starkius, and in *Fuhr. Bib. Gr. vi.* 460, and *x.* 324, though neither of them has taken notice of an Italian translation or imitation by Firenzulo, entitled *Discorsi degli animali*. See his *Prose, Fir.* 1348. The other Italian version, which they mention, by Doni, was translated into English under the title of *The Moral Philosophy of Doni out of Italian by Sir Thomas North Knight*, 4to, 1601, [*Amer.* p. 435.] and is alluded to, I suppose, by Junius in his *Epicones*, p. 494, by the name of *Doni's Philosophy*, though he has made the speaker Sir Am. La-Fool (whether designately or not I am uncertain) confound it with Reynard the Fox. Since they wrote there has been an ed. at Paris in 1724 with this title, *Contes et fables Indiennes; de Bidpai et de Lokman, traduites de l'Ali Tchelebi-Ben-Saleh, Auteur Turc, Œuvre posthume par M. Galland. The words et de Lokman in this title I suspect to have been added by the bookseller, for I cannot find any thing of Lokman in the work itself. Perhaps M. Galland might have intended to annex the fables of Lokman, but was prevented by death. For the rest, there is no material difference between this edition and a former French version, which was made from the Persick, and printed in 1698, except in the style: they both differ very considerably from the Greek.——I will just take notice that one of the fables in the Greek, p. 444, has been inserted (but with great variations) by Matthew Paris in his *History*, *ad ann.* 1195, as a parable which Rich. I. after his return from the east was used frequently to relate *ingratis redarguendo*.*

thin enemy shal the longer live in drede. The proverbe sayth, He hasteth wel that wisely can abide; and in wikked hast is no profite.

Comte de Caylus in his *Memoire sur les Fabliaux*, [Acad. des Ins. t. xx. p. 361.] under the general title of *Le chafloiment du pere au fils*. The fable of the Sheep, of which M. de Caylus has there given an abstract, is in the Latin Alfonsus, fab. ix. I will add, that the same fable, in the *Cento Nouvelle Antiche*, N. xxx. is ascribed upon one *Novellatore di messer Anzolino*; and Cervantes, changing the sheep for goats, has put it into the mouth of Sancho, *Don Quix.* p. l. c. xx. Cervantes indeed has also altered the application of it, but I think not for the better. — I am inclined to believe that Hebers, the author or translator of the French romance called *Dolopatos*, in the beginning of the 13th century, had read this work of Alfonsus perhaps before it was translated into French. The story of the stone thrown into the well, *Decameron*, vii. 4, which Fauchet supposes Boccace to have taken from Hebers, is in Alfonsus, fab. xi.: it is not in the Greek Syntipas †, which I imagine to have been the ground-

† The only copy which I have ever seen of Syntipas is in ms. Harl. 5560. I should guess that it agreed in substance with that which Du Cange made use of in his *Glossarium, Med. et Inf. Græcitate*, [See his *Index Auctorum*, p. 33.] though it seems to be of a later age and in a more depraved dialect. They differ in this, that the Harleian copy is said to have been translated from the Persick [*απο περσικης βιβλῆς ἐκ Γωματικῆν γλωττῆν*], and Du Cange's from the Syriack [*απο Συριακῆς βιβλῆν, ὡς εἶχεν αὐταῖς λῆξις, ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδα γλωττῆν*]. However, I would not vouch that it really was translated either from the Persick or Syriack. Among the oriental mss. in the Bodleian library the catalogue mentions one in Turkish, [*Kawf-nöfen*, 31.] *De uxore Chafkini Turcarum regis et filie*, which I suspect to contain this same story, translated perhaps from the Greek or from the Italian *Erasmo*. — Syntipas is said to have been printed at Venice, *Lingua Græca vulgaris*, Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* x. 515. How far that edition may agree with the Harleian ms. I cannot say, having never seen it: to judge by the ms. only it seems probable that if Syntipas was the groundwork of the Dolopatos Hebers must have departed as much from his original as the succeeding compilers of *Les sept Sages* and of *Erasmo* have from Hebers. Neither the story mentioned in the text, nor the two others which

This Melibee answered unto his wif Prudence ; I purpose not (quod he) to werken by thy conseil for

work of the Dolopatos, and therefore I presume that it was inserted by Hebers, (or the monk whose Latin he translated) and possibly from Alfonsus, at least it is not more probable that Boccace should take it from Hebers than from Alfonsus, with whose work he appears to have been well acquainted. One of his novels, *Decam.* vii. 6, is plainly copied from thence, fab. viii. and his celebrated novel of the two friends Tito and Glisippo, *Decam.* x. 8, is borrowed, with hardly any variation except in the names of persons and places, from the 2d of Alfonsus, or, which is the same thing, from the *Gesta Romanorum* ‡, into which col-

Fauchet refers to as borrowed by Boccace from Hebers, viz. *Decam.* iii. 2, and viii. 8, are to be found in the ms. Syntipas. On the other hand the story in *The Decam.* vii. 6, which is said in the text to be probably copied from Alfonsus, is also in Syntipas, though from the silence of Fauchet we may presume that it was not in the Dolopatos.—The plan of Syntipas is exactly the same with that of *Les sept Sages*, the Italian *Erigo*, the French *Erast*, and our little story-book *The Seven wise Masters*, except that instead of Dioclesian of Rome the king is called Cyrus of Persia, and instead of one tale each of the philosophers tells two. This last circumstance is an argument, I think, for the originality of Syntipas, and another may be drawn from the insipidity of the greater part of the tales. The only one of them which, as I remember, is retained in the modern *Erasmus* is that of the knight who in a fit of groundless passion killed a faithful dog, *Erast*, ch. 8. It is plainly borrowed from a story in the *Gallus u. Damask*, p. 339 of the Gr. translation, though there instead of a dog the animal is called Νύμφη, by some mistake, as I suspect, of the translator.—There is a translation of this romance, in English of iambic verse, not later than Chaucer's time, as I imagine, in ms. *Cotton*, *Gallic*, B. ix. It is entitled *The Proverbes of the Seven Sages*, and agrees exactly with *Les sept Sages de Rome* in Fauchet's prose in ms. *Harl.* 3890.

‡ The title in the printed copies is *Ex Gestis Romanorum Historiæ notabiles collæge; de virtutibusque tractantes; cum applicationibus moralibus et mysticis*. The author of this strange work is quite unknown, nor is it easy to fix with precision the time of its composition. Upon the whole I have no doubt that it is of a later date than Alfonsus, viz. the beginning of the 12th century, and I should prefer that it was composed about the end of that century, or the beginning of the 13th.—Three copies of French verses in ch. 68, and some English names in ch. 128, which are to be found in several old mss. (the former called long there numbered liii. and the latter xxviii.) though they have been let

feilling wolde change thinges that ben ordeined and affirmed by so many wise men. Secondly, I say that all women ben wicke, and non good of hem all; for

honourable to Alfonso, has been very prejudicial to his fame: for instance, a translation, as I suppose, of his last mentioned story of the two friends is entitled, in a ms. of Lydgate belonging to the late Dr. Askew, *A Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad*, or *Gesta Romanorum*, [Mr. Farmer's Notes on *The Merchant of Venice*, last edit. of *Shaksp.* App. II.] as if the tale had first appeared in that work. However somebody, not long after the invention of printing as I guess, did a little more justice to Alfonso, by putting together his principal tales, and inserting them, with his name, in a collection of the fables of Æsop and other eminent fabulists in Latin. This collection was soon turned into French, and from that version Caxton made the translation into English which has been mentioned in the *Discovery*, &c. n. 22. Caxton's book has been reprinted more than once; I have seen an edition of it in 1647, and I doubt whether there has been one since.

moreover, v. 1. See also *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 96, 7.—Ch. 118 is from Alfonso: it is repeated in the *G. N. A.* nov. 84.—Ch. 119 (ms. 102) has been verified by *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 170, b. It has been mentioned in note 6, p. 138, as taken originally from the *Septem In-ferorum*, p. 444.—Ch. 124 (ms. 20) makes the last novel of the *G. N. A.*—Ch. 157 makes the 50th novel of the *G. N. A.* but it may have been taken from Alfonso.—Ch. 171 (ms. 55) is the story of the two friends mentioned in the text.—Ch. 48, ms. contains the story of the Caskets; and ch. 99, ms. that of the Bond, the two principal incidents in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. It is said in the additional note, App. II. last ed. of *Shaksp.* that Ser Giovanni had worked up these two stories into one, as they are in the play: but that is a mistake which I beg leave to retract here. The novel of Ser Giovanni [*Pecorelle Glor.* iv. nov. 1.] is founded only upon the story of the Bond; it is probable therefore that Shakespeare took the story of the Caskets from the English *Gesta Romanorum*, and ingrafted it upon the other.—Ch. 98, ms. is copied with very little alteration in the *G. N. A.* nov. 68.—Many more stories in *Gower*, which seem to be founded upon ancient history, will appear upon examination to be taken from this book. It would lead me too far to particularise those which Lydgate, Occleve, and other later writers, have borrowed from it: I will only mention, for the credit of the collection, that ch. 80 contains the complete fable of Farnell's Hermit.

of a thousand men, saith Salomon, I founde good men; but certes of alle women good women found I never. And also, certes if I governed me by thy conseil it shulde seme that I had yve thee over me the maistrie; and God forbede that it so were; for *Jehan Sirak* sayth, that if the wif have the maistrie she is contrarious to hire husbond; and Salomon sayth, Never in thy lif to thy wif, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend, ne yve no power over thyself; for better it were that thy children axe of thee thinges that hem nedeth than thou see thy self in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy consailing certes it must be sometime secree, til it were time that it be knowen, and this ne may not be if I shulde be consailed by thee. [For it is written †, The janglerie of women ne can no thing hide save that which they wote not; after the philosophre sayth, In wikked conseil women venquishen men: and for thise reasons I ne owe not to be consailed by thee.]

† [*For it is written, &c.*] What is included between books is wanting in all the mss. which I have examined: it is plainly necessary to the sense, as it shews us what the fourth and fifth reasons of Melibeus were to which Prudence replies: I have therefore inserted as literal a translation as I imagine Chaucer might have made of the following passage in the *Fr. Melibée*, ms. *Reg. 19, C. vii.*; “Car il est escript, la genglerie des femmes ne puet riens celler fors ce qu’elle ne set. Apres le philosophre dit, en mauvais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes, et par ces raisons je ne dois point user de ton conseil.”

Whan Dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with gret science, had herd all that hire housbonde liked for to y, than axed she of him licence for to speke, and sayde this wife: My Lord, (quod she) as to your first re- n it may lightly ben answerd, for I say that it is no lie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged, elles whan the thing semeth otherwise than it se- ed afore. And moreover, I say though that ye have borne and behight to performe your emprise, and ne- rtheles ye weive to performe thilke same emprise a just cause, men shuld not say therefore ye were a cr ne forsworn; for the book sayth that the wise an maketh no lesing whan he turneth his corage for e better. And al be it that your emprise be establis- and ordeined by gret multitude of folk, yet thar you it accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh, for e trouthe of thinges and the profit ben rather foun- n in fewe folk that ben wise and ful of reson than a gret multitude of folk ther every man cryeth and sttereth what him liketh; sothly swiche multitude not honest. As to the second reson, wheras ye say at alle women ben wicke; save your grace, certes despise alle women in this wise, and he that all de- iseth, as saith the book, all desplefeth. And Senek ith, that who so wol have sapience shal no man dis- eise, but he shal gladly teche the science that he can ithout presumption or pride, and swiche thinges as nought can he shal not ben ashamed to lere hem,

Finis . II . N

of a thousand men, saith Salomon, I found o good man; but certes of alle women good woman found I never. And also, certes if I governed me by thy conseil it shulde seme that I had yeve thee over me the maillrie; and God forbede that it so were; for Jesus Sirak sayth, that if the wif have the maillrie she is contrarious to hire husbond; and Salomon sayth, Never in thy lif to thy wif, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend, ne yeve no power over thyself; for better it were that thy children axe of thee thinges that hem nedeth than thou see thy self in the handes of thy children. And also if I wol werche by thy conseilling certes it must be sometime secree, til it were time that it be knowen, and this ne may not be if I shulde be conseilled by thee. [For it is written †, The janglerie of women ne can no thing hide save that which they wote not; after the philosophre sayth. In wikked conseil women venquishen men: and for thiserelous I ne owe not to be conseilled by thee.]

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and to enquire of lesse folk than himself. And, Site, that thier hath ben ful many a good woman may lightly be preved; for certes, Sire, our Lord Jesu Crist n'olde never handescended to be borne of a woman if all women had be wicked; and after that for the grete bountee that is in women our Lord Jesu Crist what he was risen from deth to lif appered rather to a woman than to his apostles. And though that Salomon sayde he found never no good woman, it folweth not therfore that all women be wicked; for though that he ne found no good woman, certes many another man hath founde many a woman ful good and trewe: of elles, peradventure, the intent of Salomon was this, that in soveraine bountee he found no woman; this is to say, that ther is no wight that hath soveraine bountee save God alone, as he himself recordeth in his Evangelies; for ther is no creature so good that him ne wanteth somewhat of the perfection of God that is his maker. Your thridde reson is this; ye say that if that ye governeyou by my conseil it shulde seme that ye had yeve me the maiestrie and the lordship of your person. Sire, save your grace, it is not so; for if so were that no man shulde be conseilled but only of hem that han lordship and maiestrie of his person men n'olde not be conseilled so often; for sothly thilke man that asketh conseil of a purpos yet hath he free chois whether he wol werke after that conseil or non. And as to your fourth reson, *ther as ye sain* that the janglerie of women can hide

Borne of his moder that shal sterue yong by cause of
thilke werre, other elles live in forwe, and dien in
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tale by resons, wel nie alle at ones begonne they to
rise for to breken his tale, and bidden him ful oft his
wordes for to abregge; for sothly he that precheth to
hem that listen not heren his wordes his sermon hem
anoieth; for Jesus Sirak sayth that musike in weping
is a noious thing; this is to sayn, as muche availleth
to speke befor folk to which his speche anoieth as to
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man saw that him wanted audience al shamefast he
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Yet had this Melibeus in his conseil many fell that
prively in his ere conseilled him certain thing, and
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he consented to hire conseilling, and fully assented his
sentence. Than Dame Prudence, whan that she saw
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on his foos, and to beginne werre, she in ful humble

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wife, when she saw hire time, sayde him these wordes :
My Lord, (quod she) I you beseeche, as hastily as I dam
and can, ne haste you not to fall e, and for alle guardyns
as yeve me audience; for Piers Alphonse sayth, Who

† *Piers Alphonse*] He calls himself *Petrus Alfonsus* in his *Dialogus contra Judeos*, ms. *Harl.* 3861. He there informs us that he was himself originally a Jew, but converted and baptised in the year 1106, in July, *die natalis App. Petri et Pauli*, upon which account he took the name of *Petrus*; "*Fuit autem petrus meus*" "*spiritualis Alfonsus, gloriosus Hispanie Imperator,*" (the first King of Arragon of that name and the seventh of Castile)——"*quare, nomen ejus prefato nomini meo apponere, Petrus Alfonsus mihi nomen imposui.*" After his conversion he wrote the dialogue above-mentioned, and also another work which is here quoted by Chaucer, and of which therefore I think myself obliged to give some account.—It is extant in not in many libraries, but the only copy which I have had an opportunity of examining is in the Museum, *Bib. Reg.* 10 B. xii. : it is there entitled *Petri Adelfonsi de Clericali disciplina*, and begins thus; "*Dixit Petrus Adelfonsus, servus. compositor hujus libelli*—"*Libellum compegi partim ex proverbii et castigatibus Arabicis et fabulis et versibus, et partim ex animalium et volucrum similitudinibus.*"—After a short proem he enters thus upon his main subject; "*Educ igitur philosophus, qui lingua Arabicâ cognominatur Edric, dixit filio suo; Timor Domini sit tua negotiatio,*" &c.—The work then proceeds in the form of a dialogue between the philosopher and his son, in which the precepts of the former are for the most part illustrated by apposite fables and examples. *Edris* (according to *D'Herbelot*, in v.) was the name of Enoch among the Arabians, who attribute to him many fabulous compositions. Whether *Alfonso* had any of them in his view I know not, nor is it material: the manner and style of his work shew both many marks of an eastern original, and one of his stories *Of a trick put upon a thief* is entirely taken from the *Calilab u Damnah**, a cele-

* Though the exact age of the *Calilab u Damnah* be by no means clear, we know that it was translated out of Arabick into Greek by Symeon Seth several years before *Alfonso* wrote. The story mentioned

so that doth to thee outhur good or harme haste thee
not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and

braced collection of oriental apologues.—In this part of the world, however, Alfonsus may be considered as an original writer. His work was very early translated into French verse. In an old copy, *ms. Reg. 16 R. viii.* the translation is entitled *Proverbes Peres Anjorse*; and there is a short introduction by the translator, in which he says, “Voil Peres Anjors translator.”—In a later copy, *ms. Bod. 1687*, the introduction is omitted, but the poem is entitled *Le Romanz Peres Anjors coment il apriſt et chassia sun fls belement*.—In another copy, *ms. Harl. 4368*, there is neither introduction nor title, so that by the mere omissions of transcribers the French translation has put on the appearance of an original work, and is quoted as such by M. le

here is not in that copy of Symeon's translation which Starkius has printed under the title of *Specimen Sapientie Inderum*, Berlin 1697, 8vo, but it is in *ms. Bod. 510*, and in the Lat. version of Symeon's book which Pouſſin published by way of Appendix to the history of Pachymeres, *inter Scrip. Hist. Byzant.* The various titles under which this eastern romance has passed through Europe may be seen in the preface of Starkius, and in *Fabr. Bib. Gr.* vi. 460, and x. 324, though neither of them has taken notice of an Italian translation or imitation by Leonzulo, entitled *Discorsi degli animali*. See his *Proſe, Flr.* 1543. The other Italian version, which they mention, by Doni, was translated into English under the title of *The Moral Philosophy of Doni out of Italian by Sir Thomas North Knight*, 4^{to}, 1601, [*Amei.* p. 435,] and is alluded to, I suppose, by Jonſon in his *Epicene*, p. 494, by the name of *Doni's Philosophy*, though he has made the speaker Sir Am. La-Fool (whether designeily or not I am uncertain) confounds it with Reynard the Fox. Since they wrote there has been an ed. at Paris in 1724 with this title, *Contes et fables Indiennes, de Bidpai et de Lokman, traduits D'Ali Tabaki-Ban Sakib, Auteur Turc. Oeuvre posthume. par M. Galland*. The words *et de Lokman* in this title I suspect to have been added by the bookseller, for I cannot find any thing of Lokman in the work itself. Perhaps M. Galland might have intended to annex the fables of Lokman, but was prevented by death. For the rest, there is no material difference between this edition and a former French version, which was made from the Persick, and printed in 1698, except in the style: they both differ very considerably from the Greek.—I will just take notice that one of the fables in the Greek, p. 444, has been imitated (but with great variations) by Matthew Paris in his *History, ed. ann.* 1125, as a parable which Rich. I. after his return from the east was cited frequently to relate *ingratis et arguendo*.

thin enemy shal the longer live in drede. The proverbe sayth, He hasteth wel that wisely can abide; and in wikked hast is no profite.

Comte de Caylus in his *Memoire sur les Fabliaux*, [Acad. des Ins. t. xx. p. 361.] under the general title of *Le chassissement du pere au fils*. The fable of the Sheep, of which M. de Caylus has there given an abstract, is in the Latin Alfonso, fab. ix. I will add; that the same fable, in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, W. xxx. is set there upon another novellatore di meffer *Avvolino*; and Cervantes, changing the sheep for goats, has put it into the mouth of Sancho, *Don Quix.* p. 1. c. xx. Cervantes indeed has also altered the application of it, but I think not for the better. I am inclined to believe that Hebers, the author or translator of the French romance called *Dolopatus*, in the beginning of the 13th century, had read this work of Alfonso perhaps before it was translated into French. The story of the stone thrown into the well, *Decameron*, vii. 4, which Fauchet supposes Boccace to have taken from Hebers, is in Alfonso, fab. xi.: it is not in the Greek Syntipas †, which I imagine to have been the ground-

† The only copy which I have ever seen of Syntipas is in ms. Harl. 5560. I should guess that it agreed in substance with that which Du Cange made use of in his *Glossarium, Med. et Inf. Græcitate*, [see his *Index Auctorum*, p. 33,] though it seems to be of a later age and in a more depraved dialect. They differ in this, that the Harleian copy is said to have been translated from the Persick [*απο περσικης βιβλου ως Ρωμαϊκην γλωτταν*,] and Du Cange's from the Syriack [*απο Συριακης βιβλου, ως ειχεν αυταις λιξιςιν, εις την Ελλαδα γλωτταν*.] However, I would not vouch that it really was translated either from the Persick or Syriack. Among the oriental mss. in the Bodleian library the catalogue mentions one in Turkish, [*Rasulsen*, 31,] *De uxore Cebassini Turcarum regis et filio*, which I suspect to contain this same story, translated perhaps from the Greek or from the Italian *Erasmo*.—Syntipas is said to have been printed at Venice, *Lingua Græca vulgari*, *Fabric. Bibl. Gr.* x. 515. How far that edition may agree with the Harleian ms. I cannot say, having never seen it: to judge by the ms. only it seems probable that if Syntipas was the groundwork of the Dolopatus Hebers must have departed as much from his original as the succeeding compilers of *Les sept Sages* and of *Erasmo* have from Hebers. Neither the story mentioned in the text, nor the two others which

face should take it from Hebers than from Alfonso, with whose work he appears to have been well acquainted. One of his novels, *Decam.* vii. 6, is plainly copied from thence, lib. viii. and his celebrated novel of the two friends Tito and Glisippo, *Decam.* x. 3, is borrowed, with hardly any variation except in the names of persons and places, from the 2d of Alfonso, or, which is the same thing, from the *Gi. d. Romanzruik* ‡, into which Vol-

Faucher refers to as borrowed by Boccaccio from Hebers, *vizi. Decam.* lib. 2, and lib. 8, are to be found in the ms. Syntipas. On the other hand the story in *The Decam.* vii. 6, which is said in the text to be plainly copied from Alfonso, is also in Syntipas, though from the French of Faucher we may presume that it was not in the *Dolopator*.—The plan of Syntipas is exactly the same with that of *Les sept sages*, the Italian *Erzähl.* the French *Erzähl.*, and our little story-book *The Seven Wise Men*, except that instead of Dioclesian of Rome the king is called *King of Persia*, and instead of one tale each of the philosophers there are two, this last circumstance is an argument, I think, for the originality of Syntipas, and another may be drawn from the iniquity of the greater part of the tales. The only one of them which, as I remember, is retained in the modern French is that of the knight who in a fit of passion killed a faithful dog, *Les 7 sages* ch. 8. It is plainly borrowed from a story in the *Gullih u Larnah*, p. 339 of the Gr. translation, though there instead of a dog the animal is called *Nyctyn*, by some taken for as I suspect, of the translator.—There is a translation of this romance, in English octosyllable verse, not later than Chaucer's time, as I imagine, in ms. *Gottor, Götting, B. 12*. It is entitled *The Poems of the Seven Sages*, and agrees exactly with *Les sept sages de Rome* in French prose in all the important parts.

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for instance, a translation, as I suppose, of the not mentioned story of the two friends is entitled, in a ms. of Lydgate belonging to the late Dr. Askew, *A Tale of two Marchants of Egypt and of Baldad, ex Gejis Romanorum*, [Mr. Farmer's Notes on *The Merch. of Ven.* last edit. of *Shakefsp.* App. ii.] as if the tale had first appeared in that work. However somebody, not long after the invention of printing as I guess, did a little more justice to Alfonso, by putting together his principal tales, and inserting them, with his name, in a collection of the fables of Aesop and other eminent fabulists in Latin. This collection was soon turned into French, and from that version Caxton made the translation into English which has been mentioned in the *Discourse*, &c. n. 22. Caxton's book has been reprinted more than once: I have seen an edition of it in 1647, and I doubt whether there has been one since.

meron, x. 1. See also *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 96, 7.—Ch. 118 is from Alfonso: it is repeated in the *G. N. A.* nov. 84.—Ch. 119 (ms. 102) has been verified by *Gower, Conf. Amant.* b. v. fol. 110, b. It has been mentioned in note *, p. 138, as taken originally from the *Supientia Indorum*, p. 441.—Cn. 124 (ms. 20) makes the last novel of the *G. N. A.*—Ch. 157 makes the 50th novel of the *G. N. A.* but it may have been taken from Alfonso.—Ch. 171 (ms. 55) is the story of the two friends mentioned in the text.—Ch. 48, ms. contains the story of the Castles; and ch. 99, ms. that of the Bon I, the two principal incidents in *Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice*. It is said in the additional note, App. ii. last ed. of *Shakefsp.* that *ser Giovanni* had worked up these two stories into one, as they are in the play: but that is a mistake which I beg leave

of a thousand men, faith Salomon,[†]
 but certes of alle women good woman is
 And also, certes if I govermed me by thy counsel
 shulde seme that I had yere thee over me the maistris
 and Godforbode that it so were; for Jhesus Sirak
 that if the wif have the maistris she is contrarie
 hire husbond; and Salomon sayth, Never in
 thy wif, ne to thy child, ne to thy frend,
 power over thyself; for better it were that
 drede axe of thee thinges that hem ned
 see thy self in the handes of thy child
 I wol werche by thy conseil
 time secree, til it were time that it be
 ne may not be if I shulde be conseill
 is written †, The janglerie of w
 hide save that which they w
 Iosophre sayth, In wikked c
 men: and for thise reasons
 by thee.]

† [For it is written, Eccl.
 wanting in all the mss.
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 have therefore Ioseph
 Chaucer mss. Reg.
 Melibee mss. Reg.
 "femmes ne p
 "philosophre
 "les hommes
 "conseil."

Whan Dame Prudence, ful debonairly and with gret pacience, had herd all that hire housbonde liked for to say, than axed she of him licence for to speke, and sayde in this wise: My Lord, (quod she) as to your first reson it may lightly ben answerd, for I say that it is no folie to chaunge conseil whan the thing is chaunged, or elles whan the thing semeth otherwise than it seemed afore. And moreover, I say though that ye have sworn and behight to performe your emprise, and nevertheles ye weive to performe thilke same emprise by just cause, men shuld not say therfore ye were a tyer ne forsworn; for the book sayth that the wise man maketh no lesing whan he turneth his corage for the better. And al be it that your emprise be established and ordeined by gret multitude of folk, yet thar you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh, for the trouthe of thinges and the profit ben rather founden in fewe folk that ben wise and ful of reson than by gret multitude of folk ther every man cryeth and clattereth what him liketh; sothly swiche multitude is not honest. As to the second reson, wheras ye say that alle women ben wicke; save your grace, certes ye despise alle women in this wise, and he that all despiseth, as saith the book, all despiseth. And Senek saith, that who so wol have sapience shal no man disprefe, but he shal gladly teche the science that he can without presumption or pride, and swiche thinges as he nought can he shal not ben ashamed to lere hem,

and to enquire of lesse folk than
that ther hath ben ful many a good
lyghtly be preved; for certes, Sire, o
n'olde never handescended to be borne
all women had be wicked; and after th
bountee that is in women our Lord
he was risen from deth to lif appere
man than to his apoules. And th
sayde he found never no good wor
therfore that all women be wick
he ne founde many a woman f
hath founde many a woman f
elles, peraventure, the entent
in soveraine bountee he found
that ther is no wight that h
God alone, as he himself
for ther is no creature so g
what of the perfeccion
thridde reson is this; y
my conseil it shulde
strie and the lord's
grace, it is not so
confeilled but o
strie of his per
ten; for sothl
pos yet had
ter that co
ther as y

thinges that they wot not, as who so sayth that a woman can not hide that she wote; Sire, thise wordes ben understonde of women that ben jangleresses and wicked, of which women men sain that three thinges driven a man out of his hous, that is to say, smoke, dropping of raine, and wicked wives; and of swiche women Salomon sayth, that a man were better dwell in desert than with a woman that is riotous; and, Sire, by your leys, that saunot I, for ye have ful often assaied my gret filenes and my gret patience, and eke how wel that I can hide and hele thinges that men oughten secretly to hiden. And sothly as to your fiftre reson, wheras ye say that in wicked conseil women venquishen men, God wote that thilke reson stant here in no stode; for understondeth now ye axen conseil for to do wickednesse, and if ye wol werken wickednesse, and your wif restraineth thilke wicked purpos, and overcometh you by reson and by good conseil, certes your wif ought rather to be praised than to be blamed: thus shulde ye understonde the philosophre that sayth, in wicked conseil women venquishen hir husbordes. And ther as ye blamen all woman and hir resons, I shal shewe you by many ensamples that many women have ben ful good, and yet ben, and hir conseil holesome and profitable. Eke som men han sayd that the conseil of women is either to dere or elles to litel of pris: but al be it so that ful many a woman be bad, and hire conseil vile and nought worth, yet han men

founden ful many a good woman, and discrete and wise in conseilling. Lo Jacob, thurgh the good conseil of his mother Rebecke, wan the benifon of his father and the lordship over all his brethren; Judith by hire good conseil delivered the citee of Bethulie, in which she dwelt, out of the honde of Holoferne, that had it beseged, and wolde it al destroye; Abigail delivered Nabal hire housbond fro David the king, that wolde han slain him, and appeased the ire of the king by hire wit and by hire good conseilling; Hester by hire conseil enhauenced gretly the peple of God in the regne of Assuerus the king; and the same bountee in good conseilling of many a good woman moun men rede and tell. And further more, whan that oure Lord had created Adam oure forme father he sayd in this wise; It is not good to be a man allone; make we to him an helpe semblable to himself. Here moun ye see that if that women weren not good, and hir conseil good and profitable, oure Lord God of heven wolde neither han wrought hem ne called hem helpe of man, but rather confusoun of man. And ther sayd a clerk ones in two vers, What is better than gold? jaspre; what is better than jaspre? wisdom; and what is better than wisdom? woman; and what is better than a good woman? nothing. And, Sire, by many oþer reisons moun ye seen that many women ben good, and hir conseil good and profitable: and therefore, Sire, if ye wol trosse to my conseil I shal restore you your doughter



and friend, and I wol don to you so muche that
huln have honour in this cas.

Whan Melibee had herd the wordes of his wif Pru-
dence he sayd thus; I se wel that the word of Salomon
loth, for he saith that wordes that ben spoken dis-
tly by ordinaunce ben honiecombes, for they yeven
retenesse to the soule and holfomnesse to the body :
id, wif, because of thy swete wordes, and eke for I
ave preved and assaied thy grette sapience and thy
rete trouthe, I wol governe me by thy conseil in aile
hing.

Now, Sir, (quod Dame Prudence) and sin that ye
vouchesafe to be governed by my conseil I wol enforme
you how that ye shuln governe yourself in chesing of
yourre conseilours. Ye shuln first in alle your werkes
mekely beseechen to the heigh God that he wol be your
conseillour, and shapeth you to swiche entente that
he yere you conseil and comforte, as taught Tobie his
sone; At alle times thou shalt blesse God, and preie him
to dresse thy wayes; and loke that alle thy counsils ben
in him for evermore. Seint James eke sayth, If any of
you have nede of sapience axe it of God. And after-
wardethan shullen ye take counseil in yourself, and exa-
mine wel your owen thoughtes of swiche thinges as
you thinketh that ben best for your profit; and than
shuln ye drive fro your herte three thinges that ben
contrarious to good conseil, that is to sayn, ire, covci-
sise, and hastinesse.

First, he that axeth conseil of himself certes he must be withouten ire for many causes. The first is this; he that hath gret ire and wrath in himself he weneth alway that he may do thing that he may not do. And, secondly, he that is irous and wroth he may not wel deme; and he that may not wel deme may not wel conselle. The thridde is this; he that is irous and wroth, as sayth Senek, ne may not speke but blameful thinges, and with his vicious wordes he stirreth other folk to anger and to ire. And eke, Sire, ye must drive coveitise out of your herte, for the apostle sayth that coveitise is the rote of alle harmes: and trosteth wel that a coveitous man ne can not deme ne think but only to fulfille the end of his coveitise and certes that ne may never ben accomplished, for ever the more haboundance that he hath of richesse the more he desireth. And, Sire, ye must also drive out of youre herte hailnesse; for certes ye ne moun not deme for the beste a soden thought that falleth in your herte, but ye must avise you on it ful ofte, for, as ye have herde herebefore, the commune proverbe is this, He that sone demeth sone repenteth.

Sire, ye ne be not alway in like disposition, for certes som thing that sometime semeth to you that it is good for to do another time it semeth to you the contrarie.

And whan ye han taken conseil in yourself, and han demed by good deliberation swiche thing as you se-

meth beste, than rede I you that ye kepe it secret. Bewreye not your conseil to no persone, but if so be that ye wenen likerly that thurgh youre bewreying youre condition shal ben to you more profitable; for Jesus Sirak saith, Neither to thy soo ne to thy frend discover not thy secrece ne thy folie, for they woln yeve you audience and loking, and suppartation, in your presence, and scorne you in youre absence. Another clerk sayth, that scarfly shalt thou finden any persone that may kepe thy conseil secretly. The book sayth, While that thou kepest thy conseil in thin herte thou kepest it in thy prison, and whan thou bewreyest thy conseil to any wight he holdeth thee in his snare: and therefore you is better to hide your conseil in your herte than to preye him to whom ye han bewreyed youre conseil that he wol kepe it close and stille; for Seneca sayth, If so be that thou ne mayst not thin owen conseil hide how darest thou preyen any other wight thy conseil secretly to kepe? But natheles, if thou wene likerly that thy bewreying of thy conseil to a persone wol make thy condition to stonden in the better plight, than shalt thou telle him thy conseil in this wise. First, thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were lever pees or werre, or this or that, ne shewe him not thy will ne thin entente; for tressle wel that comunly these conseilours ben flaterers, namely the conseilours of grete lordes, for they enforcen hem alway rather to speken plesant wordes, enclining to the lordes

lust, than wordes that ben trewe or profitable, and therefore men sayn that the riche man hath felde good conseil but if he have it of himself. And after that thou shalt consider thy frendes and thin enemica. And as touching thy frendes, thou shalt consider which of hem ben most feithful and most wise, and eldest and most appoved, in conseilling, and of hem shalt thou see thy conseil as the cas requireth.

I say, that first ye shuln clepe to youre conseil youre frendes that ben trewe; for Salomon saith that right as the herte of a man deliteth in favour that is swote, right so the conseil of trewe frendes yeveth swetenesse to the soule: he sayth also, Ther may nothing be likened to the trewe frend, for certes gold no silver ben not so muche worth as the good will of a trewe frend: and eke he sayth, that a trewe frend is a strong defence; who so that it findeth, certes he findeth a gret trefor. Than shuln ye eke consider if that your trewe frendes ben discrete and wise, for the book saith, Axe alway thy conseil of hem that ben wise. And by this same reson shuln ye clepen to youre conseil youre frendes that ben of age, swiche as han seyn and ben expert in many thinges, and ben appoved in conseilinges; for the book sayth, In olde men is al the sapience, and in longe time the prudence: and Tullius sayth that grette thinges ne ben not ay accomplished by strengthe ne by delivernesse of body, but by good conseil, by auctoritee of persones, and by science; the *which* three thinges ne ben not feble by age, but cer-

Bar. For al be it so that thou first ne telle thy counsel but to a fewe, thou mayest afterwarde tell it to the folk if it be nede. But loke alway that thy counsellours have thilke three conditions that I have sayd before; that is to say, that they be trewe, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in every nede by on counsellour allone, for somtime behoveth it to be counselled by many; for Salomon sayth, Salvation of thinges is wher as ther ben many counsellours.

Now sith that I have told you of which folk ye shulde be counselled, now wol I teche you which counsel ye ought to eschue. First, ye shuld eschue the counselling of fooles; for Salomon sayth, Take no counsel of a fool, for he ne cannot counseile but after his owen lust and his affection: the book sayth, The propertee of a fool is this, he throweth lightly harme of every man, and lightly throweth all bountee in himself. Thou shalt eke eschue the counselling of all flaterers, swiche as enforcen hem rather to preisen youre persone by flaterie than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thinges.

Wherfore Tullius sayth, Among alle the pestilences that ben in frendship the gretest is flaterie; and therefore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flate-

rers than any other peple. The book saith, Thou shalt
 rather drede and flee fro the swete wordes of flatering
 preisers than fro the egre wordes of thy frend that
 saith thee sothes: Salomon saith, that the wordes of a
 flaterer is a snare to cacchen innocentes: he sayth al-
 so, He that speketh to his frend wordes of swetenesse
 and of plessaunce he setteth a net besorthe his feet to
 cacchen him: and therefore sayth Tullius, Encline not
 thin eres to flaterers, ne take no conseil of wordes of
 flaterie: and Caton sayth, * A wise thee wel, and eschue
 wordes of swetenesse and of plessaunce. And eke thou
 shalt eschue the conscilling of thin olde enemies that
 ben reconciled. The book sayth, that no wight re-
 tourneth safely into the grace of his olde enemy: and
 Ysop sayth, Ne trost not to hem to which thou hast
 somtime had werre or enmittee, ne telle hem not thy
 conseil: and Senek telleth the cause why; It may not
 be, sayth he, ther as gret fire hath long time endured
 that ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse; and
 therefore saith Salomon, In thin olde foo trost thou ne-
 ver; for sikerly though thin enemy be reconciled, and
 maketh thee chere of humiltee, and louteth to thee
 with his hed, ne trost him never, for certes he maketh
 thilke feined humiltee more for his profite than for any
 love of thy persone, because that he demeth to have vic-
 torie over thy persone by swiche feined contenance,
 the which victorie he might not have by strif of werre.

* *A wise thee wel*] He refers, I presume, to *Cato*, l. iii. dist. 6.;

Sermoens blandos blzsfosque cavere memento.

And Peter Alphonse sayth, Make no felawship with thin olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountee they wollen perverten it to wickednesse. And ek thou must eschue the conseilling of hem that ben thy servaunts, and beren thee gret reverence, for paraventure they sein it more for drede than for love; and therfore saith a philosophre in this wise, Ther is no wight partly trewe to him that he to fore dredeth. And Tullius sayth, Ther n'is no might so gret of any emperour that longe may endure but if he have more love of the peple than drede. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of folk that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no conseil hide; for Salomon sayth, Ther n'is no prisette ther as regneth dronkenesse. Ye shuln also have in suspect the conseilling of fwiche folk as conseilte you o thing prively and conseilte you the contrarie openly; for Cassiodore sayth that it is a manere sleighte to hinder his enemy whan he sheweth to don a thing openly and werketh prively the contrary. Thou shalt also have in suspect the conseilling of wicked folk, for hir conseil is alway ful of fraude. And David sayth, Blisful is that man that hath not folwed the conseilling of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the conseilling of yonge folk, for hir conseilling is not ripe, as Salomon saith.

Now, Sire, sith I have shewed you of which folk ye shullen take youre conseil, and of which folk ye shullen eschue the conseil, now wol I teche you how ye shuln examine your conseil after the doctrine of

Tullius. In examining than shuln confidre many thinges. A fidre that in thiske thing that th what thing that thou wolt h trouthe be said and conserue trewely thy tale; for he that be confeilled in that cas of wh this thou shalt confidre the t that thou purpofest for to do refon accord therto, and eke if therto, and if the more part an conseillours accorden therto c confidre what thing shal folw hate pees, werre, grace, profi ny other thinges, and in alle t the beste, and weive alle oth thou confidre of what roote is of thy conseil, and what fruit gendre. Thou shalt eke confid whennes they ben sprongen. amined thy conseil, as I have is the better and more profit it by many wise folk and old fidre if thou mayst performe i ende; for certes refon wol n beginne a thing but if he mig oughte, ne no wight shulde t charge that he might not be

sayth, He that to muche embroothedistreineth litel;
 and Cato saith, * Assay to do swiche thinges as thou
 hast power to don, lest the charge oppresse thee so
 sore that thou behoveth to weive thing that thou hast
 begonne. And if so be that thou be indoute whether
 thou mayst performe a thing or not, chese rather to
 suffre than to beginne. And Peter Alphonsse sayth, If
 thou hast might to don a thing of which thou must
 repente it is better nay than ya; this is to sayn, that
 althow is better to holde thy tonge stille than for to speke.
 Than mayst thou understonde by straonger reasons that
 if thou hast power to performe a werk of which thou
 shalt repente, than is thee better that thou suffre than
 beginne. Wel sain they that defenden every wight to
 assaye a thing of which he is in doute whether he may
 performe it or non. And after whan ye han examined
 youre conseil as I have said beforne, and knowen wel
 that ye moun performe your emprise, conferme it than
 sadly til it bear an ende. Now is it reson and time that
 I shewe you whan and wherfore that ye moun chaunge
 your conseil withouten repreve. Sothly a man may
 chaunge his purpos and his conseil if the cause ceseth,
 or whan a newe cas betideth; for the lawe saith, that
 upon thinges that newly betiden behoveth newe con-
 seil; and Seneca sayth, If thy conseil is comen to the
 * Assay to do swiche thinges] This precept of Cato is in l. iii.
 lib. 16.;

Quod potes id tentato; operis ne pondere pressus
 succumbat labor, et frustra tentata relinquant.

Volume IV.

O

eres of thine enemies chaungeth thy conseil. Thou mayst also chaunge thy conseil if so be that thou find that by errour or by other cause harme or damage may betide: also if thy conseil be dishoneste, other elles come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy conseil; for the lawes sain that all behestes that ben dishoneste ben of no value; and eke if so be that it be impossible, or may not goodly be performed or kept.

And take this for a general reule, that every conseil that is affirmed so strongly that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I say that thilke conseil is wicked.

This Melibeus, whan he had herd the doctrine of his wif Dame Prudence, answered in this wise: Dame, quod he, as yet unto this time ye han wel and covenablely taught me, as in general, how I shal governe me in the chesing and in the withholding of my conseilours; but now wold I fain that ye wold condescend in especial, and telle me how liketh you or what semeth you by oure conseilours that we han chosen in oure present nede.

My Lord, quod she, I beseeche you in alle humbleste that ye wol not wilfully replie agein my resons, ne displempe your herte, though I speke thing that you displese, for God wote that as in min entente I speke it for your beste, for youre honour and for youre profit eke, and sothly I hope that youre benignitee wol taken it in patience. And trosteth me wel, quod she,

that youre conseil as in this cas ne shulde not (as to speke properly) be called a conseilling, but a motion or a meving of folie, in which conseil ye han erred in many a sondry wise.

First and forward, ye han erred in the assembling of youre conseilours, for ye sholde first han cleped a fewe folk to youre conseil, and after ye mighte han shewed it to mo folk if it hadde be gode; but certes ye han sodainly cleped to your conseil a gret multitude of peple ful-chargeant and ful anyous for to here. Also ye han erred, for ther as ye shulde han only cleped to youre conseil youre trewe frendes olde and wise, ye han cleped straunge folk, yonge folk, false flatterers, and enemies reconciled, and folk that don you reverence withouten love. And eke ye han erred, for ye han brought with you to youre conseil ire, coveitise, and hastifnesse, the which three thinges ben contrary to every conseil honest and profitable, the which three thinges ye ne han not anientified or destroyed neither in youreself ne in youre conseilours as you ought. Ye han erred also, for ye han shewed to youre conseilours youre talent and youre affections to make werre anon, and for to do vengeance, and they han espied by youre wordes to what thing ye ben enclined, and therefore han they consailed you rather to youre talent than to youre profite. Ye han erred also, for it semeth that you sufficeth to han ben consailed by thise conseilours only, and with litel avis, wheras in so high and so gret



as the examination is necessarie, let us beginne at the surgiens and at the physiciens that first spoken in this matter. I say that physiciens and surgiens han sayde you in youre conseil discretly as hem oughte, and in hir speche saiden ful wisely that to the office of hem apperteineth to don to every wight honour and profite, and no wight to anoye, and after hir craft to don gret diligence unto the cure of hem which that they han in hir governaunce. And, Sire, right as they han answered wisely and discretly, right so rede I that they be highly and soverainly guerdoned for hir noble speche, and eke for they shulden do the more ententif besinesse in the curation of thy dere doughter : for al be it so that they ben youre frendes, therfore shullen ye not suffren that they serve you for nought, but ye oughte the rather guerdone hem, and shewe hem youre largesse. And as touching the proposition which the physiciens entreteden in this cas, this is to fain, that in maladies that a contrarie is warisbed by another contrarie, I wold fain knowe how ye understonde thilke text, and what is youre sentence. Certes, quod Melibeus, I understond it in this wise, that right as they han don me a contrarie, right so shulde I don hem another; for right as they han venged hem upon me and don me wrong, right so shal I venge me upon hem and don hem wrong, and than have I cured a contrarie by another.

Lo, lo! quod Dame Prudence, how lightly is every

afterth
manere people as I have saye
confeil eschue. And after this
in swiche manere that for any pre
strength that ye ne despise not
might of youre adversary so lite that
of youre persone for your presumpti
man dredeth his enemye: and Salomon
is he that of alle hath drede; for certes
the hardnesse of his herte, and thurgh th
of himself, hath to gret presumption ha
tide. Than shuln ye evermo countrewai
ments and alle espiaile; for Senek sayth
man that dredeth harmes eschueth ha
falleth into perils that perils eschueth
that it seme that thou art in liker pl
alway do thy diligence in keping
is to sayn, ne be not negligent
not only fro thy grettest enemy
enemy. Senek sayth, A man
is lest enemye Ovide
gret boll and t
ma

eth the keping of youre persone, ye shuln understand that he that hath werre shal ever more devoutly and mekely preien beforne alle thinges that Jesu Crist of his mercie wol han him in his protection, and ben his soveraine helping at his nede; for certes in this world ther is no wight that may be conseilled ne kept sufficiently withoute the keping of oure Lord Jesu Crist. To this sentence accordeth the prophete David, that sayth, If God ne kepe the citee in idel waketh he that kepeth it. Now, Sire, than shuln ye committe the keping of youre persone to youre trewe frendes that ben appoved and yknowe, and of hem shuln ye axen helpe youre persone for to kepe; for Caton saith, * If thou have nede of helpe axe it of thy frendes, for ther n'is non so good a phyficien as thy trewe frend. And after this than shuln ye kepe you fro alle straunge folk, and fro lieres, and have alway in suspect hir compaignie; for Piers Alphonse sayth, Ne take no compaignie by the way of a straunge man, but if so be that thou have knowen him of lenger time; and if so be that he falle into thy compaignie paraventure withouten thin assent, enquere than as subtilly as thou maist of his conversation, and of his lif beforne, and feine thy way, saying thou wolt go thider as thou wolt not go; and if he bere a spere hold thee on the right side, and if he bere a swerd hold thee on his left side. And

* *If thou have nede*] *Cato*, l. iv. dist. 14.;

Auxilium a nolite petito, si forte laboras;

Nec quisquam melior medicus quam fidus amicus.

ther is a maner ge-
ne discomfite, and that is a
citizeins and of his peple.

Now, Sire, as to the thridde point, whereas
olde and wise counsellours sayden that you ne oughte
not sodeinly ne hastily proceden in this nede, but that
you oughte purveyen and appareilen you in this cas
with gret diligence and gret deliberation, trewely I
trowe that they sayden right wisely and right soth;
for Tullius sayth, In every nede er thou beginne it
appareile thee with gret diligence. Than say I tharin
vengeaunce taking in werre, in bataille, and in war-
nestoring, er thou beginne I rede that thou appareile
thee therto, and do it with gret deliberation; for Tul-
lius sayth that longe appareiling tofore the bataill
maketh short victorie; and Cassiodorus sayth, T
garneison is stronger when it is longe time avised
But now let us speken of the conseil that w
corded by youre neigheboours swiche as don
verence withouten love, youre olde enemy
ciled, your flatereres, that counseilled y
things prively, and openly counseilled y
trarie, the yonge folk also, that couns
venge you and to make werre anon. C
I have sayde beforne, ye han gretly e

ichemanner folk to youre conseil, which conseil-
en ynough reproved by the reasons afore said :
theles, let us now descende to the special Ye
ast proceden after the doctrine of Tullius. Cer-
e trouthe of this matere or of this conseil nedeth
iligently to enquire, for it is wel wist which they
that han don to you this trespass and vilanie, and
many trespassours, and in what manere, they han
to you all this wrong and all this vilanie. And after
than shuln ye examine the second condition which
t the same Tullius addeth in this matere: for Tul-
e putteth a thing which that he clepeth Consent-
g; this to sayn, who ben they, and which ben they,
d how many, that consenten to thy conseil in thy
ilfulnesse to don hastif vengeance. And let us con-
sire also who ben they, and how many ben they, and
hich ben they, that consenteden to youre adversa-
es. As to the first point, it is wel knowen which folk
ey be that consenteden to youre wilfulnesse. for
ewely all tho that conseileden you to maken sodein
erre ne ben not youre frendes. Let us now conside
hich ben they that ye holden so gretly youre frendes
to youre persone, for al be it so that ye be mighty
nd riche, certes ye ne ben but allone; for certes ye ne
un no child but a doughter, ne ye ne han no breth-
en, ne cosins germains, ne non other nigh kinrede,
herfore that your enemies for drede shulde stinte to
ledo with you or to destroye youre persone. Ye

known also that your riches moten ben dispendid in diuerse parties, and whan that every wight hath his part they ne wollen taken but litel regard to vengeance deth. But thin enemies ben three, and they han many brethren, children, cosins, and other nigh kinrede; and though so were that thou haddeft slain of hem two or three, yet dwellen ther ynow to wreken hir deth, and to see thy persone. And though so be that youre kinrede be more stedfast and fiker than the kin of your aduersaries; yet natheles youre kinrede is but a fer kinrede; they ben but litel sibbe to you; and the kin of youre enemies ben nigh sibbe to hem; and certes as in that hir condition is better than youre. Than let us confidre also of the conseilling of hem that consailed you to take sodein vengeance, whether it acorde to reson; and certes ye knowe wel nay; for as by right and reson ther may no man taken vengeance on no wight but the juge that hath the jurisdiction of it, whan it is ygraunted him to take thilke vengeance hastily or attemprely as the lawe requirerh. And yet moreover of thilke word that Tullius clepeth Consenting, thou shalt confidre if thy might and thy power may consente and suffice to thy wilfulnesse and to thy conseilours; and certes thou mayest wel say that Nay; for fikerly, as for to speke properly, we moun do nothing but only swiche thing as we moun don rightfully; and certes rightfully ye ne mowe take no vengeance, as of your propre auc-

torite. Than mowe ye sen that your power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not to youre wilfulnesse. Now let us examine the thridde point, that Tullius clepeth Consequent. Thou shalt understonde that the vengeaunce that thou purpofest for to take is the consequent, and therof folweth another vengeance, perill, and werre, and other damages withouten nombre, of which we ben not ware as at this time. And as touching the fourthe point, that Tullius clepeth Engendring, thou shalt consider that this wrong which that is don to thee is engendred of the hate of thin enemies, and of the vengeaunce taking upon that wold engender another vengeaunce, and muchel sorwe and wasting of riches, as I sayde ere

Now, Sire, as to the point that Tullius clepeth Causes, which that is the last point, thou shalt understonde that the wrong that thou hast received hath certayne causes which that clerkes clepen *oriens* and *efficiens*, and *causa longinqua* and *causa propinqua*; this is to sayn, the ter cause and the nigh cause. The fer cause is almighty God, that is cause of alle thinges; the ner cause is thin three enemies; the cause accidental was hate; the cause material ben the five woundes of thy daughter; the cause formal is the maner of hir working, that broughten ladders and climbeth in at thy window; the cause final was for to flee thy daughter: it leved not in as muche as in hem was. But for to looke on the fer cause, is to what end they shuln come, or what shal

finally betide of hem in this cas, ne can I not deme but by conjecting and supposing; for we shuln suppose that they shuln come to a wicked ende, because that the book of Decrees sayth, Selden or with grei peine ben causes ybrought to a good ende whan they ben badly begonne.

Now, Sire, if men wold axen me why that God suffered men to do you this vilanie, certes I can not wel answer as for no sothfastnesse; for the apostle sayth that the sciences and the jugements of oure Lord God Almighty ben ful depe; ther may no man comprehend ne serche hom suffisantly; natheles, by certain presumptions and conjectings I hold and belowe that God, which that is ful of justice and of rightwisenesse, hath suffered this betide by just cause resonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to sayn, a man that drinketh hony. Thou hast dronke so muche hony of swete temporel riches, and delices, and honours of this world, that thou art drunken, and hast forgotten Jesu Crist thy creatour: thou ne hast not don to him swiche honour and reverence as thee ought, ne thou ne hast wel ytaken kepe to the wordes of Ovide, that sayth, Under the honey of the goodes of thy body is hid the venime that sleth the soule: and Salomon sayth, If thou hast founden hony etc of it that sufficeth, for if thou etc of it out of mesure thou shalt spewe, and be neddy and poure. And peradventure Crist hath thee in despit, and hath tourned away fro thee his face

and his eres of misericorde, and also he hath suffred that thou hast ben punished in the manere that thou hast ytrespased. Thou hast don sinne again oure Lord Crist, for certes the three enemies of mankind, that is to sayn, the flesh, the fend, and the world, thou hast suffred hem entre into thin herte wilfully by the windowes of thy body. and hast not defended thyself sufficiently agcin his assautes and hir temptations, so that they han wounded thy soule in five places; this is to sayn, the dedly sinnes that ben entred into thyn herte by thy five wittes: and in the same manere our Lord Crist hath wold and suffred that thy three enemies ben entred into thyn hous by the windowes, and han ywounded thy doughter in the foresayd manere.

Certes, quod Melibee, I see wel that ye enforce you muchel by wordes to overcomen me in swiche manere that I shal not venge me on mine enemies, shewing me the perils and the evils that mighten falle of this vengeance; but who so wolde conside in alle vengeance the perils and evils that mighten sue of vengeance taking a man wold never take vengeance, and that were harme; for by the vengeance taking ben the wicked men dislevered fro the goode men, and they that han will to do wickednesse restrainen hir wicked purpos when they sen the punishing and chastising of the trespassours. [I o this s^olwe^oed

of the trespassours] That I have not done so, I have seen to be very material to the sense, I have translated from

Dame Pi
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A! fa
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 "relpont
 "vengea
 "n'appa
 "a ceulx

ye shuln not assaye Fortune by no way, ne ye ne
not lene or bowe unto hire, after the wordes of Se
for thinges that ben folily don, and tho that ben
in hope of Fortune, shuln never come to good e
And as the same Senek sayth, The more clere and
more shining that Fortune is the more brotel and
soner broke she is. Trusteth not in hire, for she
not stedefast ne stable, for whan thou trowest t
most siker and seure of hire helpe she wol faille
receiue thee. And wheras ye sayn that Fortune
nourished you fro youre childhode, I say that in fo
wel ye shuln the lesse truste in hire and in hire
for Senek saith, What man that is nourished by
ane she maketh him a gret fool. Now than si
e fire and axe vengeaunce, and the vengeaunce
don after the lawe and before the juge ne liketh
not, and the vengeaunce that is don in hope of

that men hand on to me I sompne or warne hem that han don to me vilanie, and alle other, to do me another vilanie; for it is written, If thou take ne vengeance of an olde vilany thou sompnest this adversaries to do thee a newe vilanie; and also for my suffraunce men wolden do me so muche vilanie that I might neither bere it ne susteine, and so shulde I ben put and holden over lowe; for four men sain, In muchel suffering shul many thinges falle unto thee which thou shalt not mowe suffre:

Certes, quod Prudence, I graunte you wel that overmuchel suffraunce is not good, but yet ne solveth it not therof that every persone to whom men don vilanie shuld take of it vengeance, for that apperteineth and longeth all only to the juges, for they shal venge the vilanies and injuries; and therfore the two auctoritees that ye han sayd above ben only understonden in the juges, for whan they suffren overmuchel the wronges and vilanies to be don withouten punishing they sompne not a man all only for to do newe wronges but they commaunden it, al so as a wise man sayth that the jure that correcteth not the sinner commaundeth and biddeth him do sinne: and the juges and soveraines mighten in hir lond so muche suffre of the shrewes and misdoers, that they shulden by swiche suffraunce by proces of time wexen of swiche power and might that they shuld putte out the juges and the soveraines from hir places, and atte laste *maken* hem lese hir lordshippes.

But now let us putte that ye have leve to venge you : I say ye be not of might and power as now to venge you ; for if ye wol maken comparison unto the might of youre adversaries, ye shuln finde in many thinges that I have shewed you er this that hir condition is better than youre, and therfore say I that it is good as now that ye suffre and be patient.

Forthermore, ye knowen wel that after the commune saw it is a woodnesse a man to strive with a stronger or a more mighty man than he is himself; and for to strive with a man of even strengthe, that is to say, with as strong a man as he is, it is peril; and for to strive with a weker man it is folie; and therfore shulde a man flee striving as muchel as he mighte; for Salomon sayth, It is a gret worship to a man to kepe him fro noile and strif. And if it so happe that a man of greter mighte and strengthe than thou art do thee grevaunce, studie and besie thee rather to stille the same grevaunce than for to venge thee; for Senek sayth, that he putteth him in a grete peril that striveth with a greter man than he is himself; and Caton sayth, * If a man of higher estat or degree, or more mighty than thou, do thee anoye or grevance suffre him, for he that ones hath greved thee may another time releve thee and helpe thee. Yet I the I

* [*If a man of higher estat*] This prudent advice is from *Cato*, l. iv. dist. 47.

Cato *in* *manibus*, *fortuna* *in* *code* *procedit* [*potentia*]

Laurea *et* *potestas*, *procedit* *dispendio* *valuit*.

THE TALE OF MELIBREUS.

ye bothe might and licence for to venge you;
ther ben ful many thinges that shuln restraine
vengeance taking, and make you for to encline
ce and for to han patience in the wronges that
en don to you. First and forward, if yewol con-
the defautes that ben in youre owen persone, for
ich defautes God hath suffred you have this tribu-
cion, as I have sayd to you herebeforne; for the poete
ayth, that we oughten patiently taken the tribula-
tions that comen to us, whan that we thinken and con-
sideren that we han deserved to have hem; and Seint
Gregorie sayth, that whan a man considereth wel the
nombre of his defautes and of his sinnes the pain
and the tribulations that he suffereth semen the
unto him; and in as muche as him thinketh his
more hevy and grevous, in so muche semeth his
the lighter and the esier unto him. Also ye o-
encline and bowe youre herte to take the pain
oure Lord Jesu Crist, as sayth Seint Peter in
les. Jesu Crist (he sayth) hath suffred for us,
ensample to every man to solwe and sue
dide never sinne, ne never came ther a-
out of his mouth. Whan men cursed
hem nought, and whan men beten
hem nought. Also the gret patience
that ben in Paradis han had in tribul
han suffred withouten hir desert or gi
firre you to patience. Forthermore

you to have patience, considering that the tribulations of this world but litel while endure, and sone passed ben and gon, and the joye that a man seketh to han by patience in tribulations is perdurable; after that the apostle sayth in his epistle, The joye of God, he sayth, is perdurable, that is to sayn, everlasting. Also troweth and beleveth stedfastly that he n'is not wel ynorished ne wel ytaught that cannot have patience, or wol not receive patience; for Salomon sayth, that the doctrine and wit of a man is knowen by patience; and in another place he sayeth, that he that is patient governeth him by gret prudence: and the same Salomon sayth, The angrie and wrathful man maketh noises, and the patient man attempreth and stilleth hem: he saith also, It is more worth to be patient than to be right strong; and he that may have the lordshipe of his owen herte is more to preise than he that by his force or strengthe taketh gret citees: and therefore sayth Seint James in his epistle that patience is a gret vertue of perfection.

Certes, quod Melibee, I grannte you, Dame Prudence, that patience is a gret vertue of perfection, but every man may not have the perfection that ye taken, ne I am not of the nonibre of the right parlit men, for min herte may never be in pees unto the time it be venged. And al be it so that it was gret peril to min enemies to do me a vilanie in taking vengeance upon me, yet taken they non hede of the peril, but

fulfilleden hir wicked will and hir corage; and therefore me thinketh men oughten not reprove me though I put me in a litel peril for to venge me, and though I do a gret excelle, that is to sayn, that I venge on outrage by another.

A! quod Dame Prudence, ye sayn your will and as you liketh; but in no cas of the world a man shuice not don outrage ne excelle for to vengen him; for Cistoure sayth, that as evil doth he that vengeth him by outrage as he that doth the outrage; and therefore ye shuine venge you after the ordre of right, that is to sayn, by the lawe, and not by excelle ne by outrage. And also if ye wol venge you of the outrage of youre adversaries in other manere than right cunne doth ye fenen; and therefore sayth Senek, that a man shal never venge shrewednesse by shrewednesse. And if ye say that right axeth a man to defende violence by violence and fighting by fighting, certes ye say right, whan the defence is don withouten intervale, or withouten tarying or delay, for to defende him, and not for to venge: and it behoveth that a man putte swiche attemperaunce in his defence that men have no cause ne mater to reprove him that defendeth him of outrage and excelle, for elles were it againe resen. Harde ye knowen wel that ye maken no defence as now for to defende you, but for to venge you, and it sheweth it that ye han no will to do youre defence properly; and therefore me thinketh that patient

is good ; for Salomon sayth, that he that is not patient shal have gret harme.

Certes, quod Melibee, I graunte you that whan a man is impatient and wrothe of that that toucheth him not, and that apperteineth not unto him, though it harme him it is no wonder ; for the lawe saith that he is coupable that entremeteth or medleth with swiche thing as apperteineth not unto him ; and Salomon saith, that he that entremeteth of the noife or strif of another man is like to him that taketh a straunge hound by the eres, for right as he that taketh a straunge hound by the eres is other while bitten with the hound, right in the same wise it is reson that he have harme that by his impatience medleth him of the noife of another man wheras it apperteineth not unto him. But ye knowe wel that this dede, that is to sayn, my greef and my disese, toucheth me right nigh ; and therefore though I be wroth and impatient it is no mer-vaille : and (saving your grace) I cannot see that it might gretly harme me though I took vengeance, for I am richer and more mighty than min enemies ben ; and wel knowe ye that by money and by having grete possessions ben alle thinges of this world governed ; and Salomon sayth that alle thinges obeye to money.

Whan Prudence had herd hire hufbond avaunte him of his richesse and of his money, dispreiing the power of his adverfaries, she spake and sayd in this

wife: Certes, dere Sire! I graunte you that
 and mighty, and that riches ben good
 han wel ygeten-been, and that wel comy
 for right as the body of a man may not
 outen soul, no more may it liven without
 goodes, and by riches may a man get
 frendes; and therfore sayth Pamphilus, *his*
 daughter (he sayth) be riche, she may chel
 sand men which she wol take to hire-hall
 a thousand men on wol not forsaken hir
 hire. And this Pamphilus saith also, if th
 happy, that is to sayn, if thou be right
 shalt finde a gret nombre of felawes and f
 if thy fortune chaunge, that thou weze
 wel frendshipe and felawshipe, for thou
 allone withouten any compaignie but if it
 paignie of poure folk. And yet sayth th
 lus moreover, that they that ben bound ar
 linage shuln be made worthy and noble
 And right so as by riches ther comen m
 right so by poverte come ther many
 eviles, for gret poverte constreinet a ma
 ny eviles; and therfore clepeth Cassiod
 the moder of ruine, that is to sayn, th

* *If a netherland daughter*] The edit. have strai
 ed this into—a *nether* daughter. The reading
 restored from the mss. is confirmed by the orig
Pamphilus, ms. Bod. 3763. 3.

*Dum modo sit dives cupideri nata bubulci,
 Eligat e mille quon libet illa viam.*

wing or falling down ; and therefore sayth
 fonsse, On of the grettest aduersitees of this
 whan a free man by kinde, or of birthe, is
 led by povertie to eten the almesse of his ene-
 mie the same sayth Innocent in on of his bookes :
 that sorweful and mishappy is the condition
 of a begger, for if he axe not his mete he dieth
 of hunger, and if he axe he dieth for shame ; and al-
 messe constreioeth him to axe ; and therefore
 comon, that better it is to die than for to have
 overte ; and, as the same Salomon sayth, Bet-
 ter to die of bitter deth than for to liven in swiche
 a thise resons that I have said unto you, and
 other resons that I coude saye, I graunte you
 riches ben good to hem that wel geten hem,
 and that wel usen tho riches ; and therefore
 shew you how ye shuln behave you in gade-
 youre riches, and in what manere ye shuln
 use.

ye shuln geten hem withouten gret desir, by
 labour, sokingly, and not over hastily, for a man
 that desiring to gete riches abandoneth him
 to theste and to alle other eviles ; and therefore
 Salomon, He that hasteth him to besily to wexe
 shal be non innocent : he sayth also, that the
 that hastily cometh to a man sone and lightly
 and passeth from a man, but that richesse that
 litel and litel waxeth alway and multiplieth.

And, Sir, ye shulen gete riches
 and by youre travaille, unto youre
 withouten wrong or harme doing to
 for the lawe sayth, Ther maketh no
 if he do harme to another wight; th
 Nature defendeth and forbedeth by
 make himself riche unto the harme
 sone. And Tullius sayth, that no for
 of deth, ne nothing that may falle a
 muchel ageins nature as a man to e
 profite to harme of another man. A
 grete men and the mighty men gete
 lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not b
 to do thy profite, for thou shalt in al
 nesse; for Salomon sayth, that idelnes
 to do many eviles: and the same Sale
 he that travailleth and besiet him t
 shal ete bred, but he that is idel, and
 no besynesse ne occupation, shal falle in
 die for hunger. And he that is idel an
 find covenable time for to do his pro
 a versifiour sayth, that the idel man
 winter because of the grete cold, an
 encheson of the hete. For thise caus
 Waketh*, and enclineth you not over

* *Waketh*, [Sc.] I can find nothing nearer
 the maxim, l. iii. dist. 7.; *Segnitiam fugito*.
 tions from the same author in the following
 sic l. iv. dist. 17, and l. iii. dist. 32.

muchel reste noriseth and causeth many
 id therfore sayth Seint Jerome, Doeth som
 des, that the devil which is oure enemie ne
 a not unoccupied, for the devil ne taketh not
 into his working swiche as he findeth occu-
 poode werkes.

thus in geting riches y^e musten flee idel-
 id afterward ye shuln usen the riches which
 geten by youre wit and by youre travaille in
 manere that men holde you not to scarce ne to
 ne fool-large, that is to say, over large a spen-
 right as men blamen an avaricious man be-
 his scarcitee and chincherie, in the same wise
 blame that spendeth over largely; and ther-
 h Caton, Use (sayth he) the riches that thou
 tem in swiche manere that men have no ma-
 aule to calle thee nother wretche ne chiuiche,
 a gret shame to a man to have a poure herte
 iche purse: he sayth also, The goodes that
 it ygeten use hem by mesure, that is to sayn,
 nesurably, for they that folily wasten and di-
 the goodes that they han whan they han no
 opre of hir owen that they shapen hem to take
 les of another man. I say than that ye shuln
 rice, using youre riches in swiche manere
 n sayn not that your riches ben yberied, but
 have hem in youre might and in youre wel-
 r a wise man repreveth the avaricious man;

Qij

sayth thus in two vers, Wherto and why berietþ a man his goodes by his gret avarice, and knoweth wel that nedes must he die, for deth is the end of every man as in this present lif? and for what cause or enchefon joineth he him or knitteth he him so fast unto his goodes that alle his wittes mowen not deliveren him or departen him from his goodes, and knoweth wel, or oughte to knowe, that when he is ded he shal nothing bere with him out of this world? and therfore sayth Seint Augustine, that the avaricious man is likened unto helle, that the more it swalweth the more desir it hath to swalwe and devoure. And as wel as ye wolde eschue to be called an avaricious man or chinche, as wel shulde ye kepe you and governe you in swiche a wise that men calle you not fool-large; therfore saith Tullius, The goodes of thin hous ne shulde not ben hid ne kept so close but that they might ben opened by pitee and debonairetee, that is to sayn, to yeve hem part that han gret nede; ne thy goodes shulden not ben so open to be every mannes goodes. Afterward, in geting of youre richeffes and in using of hem ye shuln alway have three thinges in youre herte, that is to say, oure Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shuln have God in youre herte, and for no richeffe ye shuln do no thing which may in any manere displese God that is your creatour and maker; for, after the word of Salomon, It is better to have a litel good with love of God than to have

I good and lese the love of his Lord God: and
 phete sayth, that better it is to ben a good man
 we: ltel good and tresor than to be holden a
 and have grete riches. And yet I say for-
 me; that ye shulden alway do youre besynesse to
 riches, so that ye gete hem with good con-
 . And the apostle sayth, that there n'is thing
 world of which we shulden have so gret joye
 neure conscience bereth us good witnesse; and
 le man sayth, The substaunce of a man is ful
 has sinne is not in mannes conscience. After-
 a geting of youre riches and in using of hem
 it have gret besynesse and gret diligence that
 good name be alway kept and conserved; for
 in sayth, that beter it is and more it availeth
 to have a good name than for to have grete ri-
 ; and therefore he sayth in another place, Do
 diligence (saith Salomon) in keping of thy frendes
 hy good name, for it shal lenger abide with thee
 ay tresor, be it never so precious; and certes
 de not be called a Gentilman that after God
 od conscience alle thinges lest ne doth his dili-
 and besynesse to kepen his good name; and Cas-
 sayth, that it is a signe of a gentil herte whan
 loveth and desireth to have a good name; and
 e sayth Seint Augustine, that ther ben two
 that arn right necessarie and nedeful, and that
 conscience and good los; that is to sayn, good

conscience to thin owen persone inward, and good los for thy neighebour outward. And he that troseth him so muchel in his good conscience that he despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or los, and recketh not though he kepe not his good name, is but a cruel cherl.

Sire, now have I shewed you how ye shulden do in geting riches, and how ye shulw use hem; and I see wel that for the trust that ye han in youre riches ye wiln meve werre and bataille. I conseille you that ye beginne no bataille ne werre in trust of youre riches, for they ne sufficien not werres to mainteine; and therfore sayth a philosophre, That man that desireth and wol algates han werre shal never have suffisaunce, for the richer that he is the greter dispences must he make, if he wol have worship and victorie; and Salomon saith, that the greter riches that a man hath the mo dispendours he hath. And, dere Sire! at be it so that for your riches ye monn have muchel folk, yet behoveth it not ne it is not good to beginne werre, wheras ye moun in other manere have pees unto youre worship and profite; for the victorie of batailles that ben in this world lith not in gret nombre or multitude of peple, ne in the vertue of man, but it lith in the will and in the hond of oure Lord God Almighty; and therfore Judas Machabeus, which was Goddes knight, whan he shulde fighte again his adversarie that hadde a greter nombre and a greter mal-

titude of folk, and strengre than was the peple of this Machabee, yet he recomforted his litel compaignie, and sayde right in this wise ; Al so lightly (sayde he) may our Lord God Almighty yeve victorie to a fewe folk as to many folk, for the victorie of a bataille cometh not by the gret nombre of peple, but it cometh from oure Lord God of heven. And, dere Sire ! for as muchel as ther is no man certaine if it be worthy that God yeve him victorie or not, after that Salomon sayth, Therefore every man shulde gretly drede werres to beginne ; and because that in batailles fallen many perils, and it happeth other while that as sone is the gret man slain as the litel man ; and, as it is ywritten in the second book of Kinges, The dedes of batailles ben aventurous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is on hurt with a spere as another ; and for ther is gret peril in werre, therefore shulde a man flee and eschue werre in as muchel as a man may goodly ; for Salomon sayth, He that loveth peril shal falle in peril.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this manere Melibee answerd and saide : I see wel, Dame Prudence, that by youre faire wordes and by youre resons that ye han shewed me that the werre liketh you nothing ; but I have not yet herd your conseil how I shal do in this nede.

Certes, quod she, I conseille you that ye accorde with youre adversaries. and that ye have pees with hem ; for Scint James sayth in his Epistle that by con-

my worme
to gret humilitee or mekenesse.
an Dame Prudence to make semblaunt of
d fayde, Certes, Sire, (sauf your grace) I
honour and youre profite as I do min owen,
have don, ye ne non other seyn never the
; and if I had fayde that ye shulde han pur-
ne pees and the reconciliation I ne hadde not
mistake me ne fayde amis; for the wise man
the dissention beginneth by another man, and
conciling beginneth by thyself: and the pro-
faith, Flee shrewednesse and do goodnesse; seke
and folwe it, in as muchel as in thee is. Yet say

I not that ye shuln rather pursue to youre adversaries for pees than they shuln to you, for I know wel that ye ben so hard-herted that ye wol do nothing for me ; and Salomon sayth, He that hath over hard an herte sette laste he shal misshappe and mislide.

Whan Melibee had herd Dame Prudence make semblaunt of wrath he sayde in this wise : Dame, I pray you that ye be not displefed of thinges that I say, for I knowe wel that I am angry and wroth, and that is no wonder, and they that ben wroth woten not wel what they don ne what they sayn ; therfore the prophete sayth, that troubled eyen han no clere fighte. But sayth and conseillesh me as you liketh, for I am redy to do right as ye wol desire ; and if ye reprove me of my folie I am the more holden to love you and to preise you ; for Salomon saith, that he that repreveth him that doth folie he shal find greter grace than he that deceiveth him by swete wordes.

Than sayde Dame Prudence, I make no semblaunt of wrath ne of anger but for youre grete profite ; for Salomon saith, He is more wroth that repreveth or chideth a fool for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and preiseth him in his misdoing, and laugheth at his folie ; and this same Salomon saith afterward, that by the sorweful visage of a man, that is to sayn, by the fory and hevy countenance of a man, the fool correcteth and amendeth himself.

Than said Melibee, I shal not conne answere unto so many faire reasons as ye putten to me and shewen: sayth shortly youre will and youre conseil, and I am al redy to performe and fulfille it.

Than Dame Prudence discovered all hire will unto him, and saide, I conseille you, quod she; above alle thinges that ye make pees betwene God and you, and be reconciled unto him and to his grace, for as I have sayde you herebeforen, God hath suffered you to have this tribulation and disese for youre sinnes: and if ye do as I say you God wol sende, youre adversaries unto you, and make hem falle at youre feet, redy to do youre will and youre commandements; for Salomon sayth, Whan the condition of man is plefaunt and liking unto God he chaungeth the hertes of the mannes adversaries, and constreineth hem to beseechen him of pees and of grace. And I pray you let me speke with your adversaries in prevee place, for they shuln not knowe that it be of youre will or youre assent, and than whan I knowe hir will and hir entente I may conseille you the more seurely.

Dame, quod Melibeus, doth youre will and youre liking, for I putte me wholly in youre disposition and ordinaunce.

Than Dame Prudence, whan she sey the good will of hire husbond, delibered unto hire, and toke avis in hire self, thinking how she might bring this nede unto goode ende; and whan she sey hire time she sent

for thise adversaries to come unto hire in to a privee place, and shewed wisely unto hem the grete goodes that comen of pees, and the grete harmes and perils that ben in werre; and saide to hem in a goodly manere how that hem oughte have gret repentaunce of the injuries and wronges that they hadden don to Melibeus hire lord, and unto hire and to hire doughter.

And whan they herden the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence they weren so surprised and ravished, and hadden so gret joye of hire, that wonder was to telle. A, Lady! quod they, ye have shewed unto us the blessing of swetenesse, after the saying of David the prophete; for the reconciling which we be not worthy to have in no manere, but we oughten requeren it with grete contrition and humilitee, ye of youre grete goodnesse have presented unto us. Now see we wel that the science and conning of Salomon is ful trewe; for he saith, that swete wordes multiplen and encreasen frendes, and maken shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes, quod they, we putten oure dede and all oure matere and cause al holly in youre good will, and ben redy to obeye unto the speche and commaundement of my Lord Melibeus; and therfore, dere and benigne Lady! we praye you and besече you, as mekely as we conne and moun, that it like unto youre grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede youre goodly wordes; for we consideren and knowelechen that we han offended and greved my Lord Melibeus out of mesure, so fer forth

that we ben not of power to maken him amendes, and therefore we oblige and binde us and oure frendes for to do all his will and his commaundements : but peraventure he hath swiche hevynesse and swiche wrath to us ward, because of our offence, that he wol enjoynen us swiche a peine as we moun not bere ne susteine; and therefore, noble Ladie! we beseeche to youre womanly pitteeto take swiche avisement in this nede that we ne oure frendes ben not disherited and destroyed thurgh oure folie.

Certes, quod Prudence, it is an hard thing and right perilous that a man putte him all outrely in the arbitration and jugement and in the might and power of his enemie; for salomon sayth, Leveth me and yeveth credence to that that I shall say; To thy sone, to thy wif, to thy frend, ne to thy brother, ne yeve thou never might ne maistrie over thy body while thou livest. Now, sith he defendeth that a man shulde not yeve to his brother ne to his frend the might of his body, by a stronger reson he defendeth and forbedeth a man to yeve himself to his enemy. And natheles I counseille you that ye mistruste not my lord, for I wot wel and know veraily that he is debonaire and meke, large, curteis, and nothing desirous ne covetous of good ne richesse, for ther is nothing in this world that he desireth save only worshipec and honour. Forthermore, I know wel and am right sure that he shal nothing do in this nede withouten my conseil, and I shal so wer-

ken in this cas that by the grace of oure Lord God ye shuln be reconciled unto us.

Than saiden they with o vois, Worshipful Lady! we putten us and oure goodes al fully in youre will and disposition, and ben redy to come what day that it like unto youre nobleffe to limite us or assigne us for to make oure obligation and bond as strong as it liketh unto youre goodnesse, that we moun fulfille the will of you and of my Lord Melibee.

Whan Dame Prudence had herd the answer of thise men she bad hem go agein prively, and she retourned to hire Lord Melibee, and told him how she fond his adversariesful repentaunt, knowleching ful lowly hir sinnes and trespas, and how they weren redy to suffren all peine, requering and preying him of mercy and pitee.

Than saide Melibee, He is wel worthy to have pardon and foryevenesse of his sinne that excuseth not his sinne, but knowlecheth and repenteth him, axing indulgence; for Senek saith, Ther is the remission and foryevenesse wher as the confession is, for confession is neighebour to innocence: and therefore I assente and conferme me to have pees; but it is good that we do nought withouten the assent and will of onre fren-des.

Than was Prudence right glad and joyeful, and *sai* de, Certes, Sire, ye han wel and goodly answered; *for* right as by the conseil, assent, and helpe, of your

friendes ye han be stired to venge you and make werre, right so withouten hir conseil shul ye not accord you ne have pees with youre adversaries; for the lawe saith, Ther is nothing so good by way of kinde as a thing to be unbounde by him that it was ybounde.

And than Dame Prudence, withouten delay or tarying, sent anon hire messageres for hir kin and for hir olde friendes which that were trewe and wise, and told hem by ordre in the presence of Melibee all the matere as it is above exprested and declared, and preied hem that they wold yeve hir avis and conseil what were best to do in this nede. And whan Melibee's friendes hadden taken hir avis and deliberation of the foresaid matere, and hadden examined it by gret besynesse and gret diligence, they yaven ful conseil forto have pees and reste, and that Melibee shulde receive with good herte his adversaries to foryevenesse and mercy.

And whan Dame Prudence had herd the assent of hire Lord Melibee, and the conseil of his friendes accord with hire will and hire entention, she was wonder glad in hire herte, and sayde, Ther is an old proverbe, quod she, sayth, that the goodnesse that thou maist do this day do it, and abide not ne delay it not til to morwe; and therfore I conseille that ye sende youre messageres, swiche as ben discret and wise, unto youre adversaries, telling hem on youre behalf that if they wol trete of pees and of accord that they shape

hem withouten delay or taryng to come unto us. Which thing parfourned was indede. And whan thise trespassours and repenting folk of hir folies, that is to sayn, the adversaries of Melibee, hadden herd what thise messageres sayden unto hem they weren right glade and joyeful, and answerden ful mekely and benignely, yelding graces and thankinges to hir Lord Melibee and to all his compaignie, and shopen hem withouten delay to go with the messageres, and obeye to the commaundement of hir Lord Melibee.

And right anon they token hir way to the court of Melibee, and token with hem som of hir trewe frendes to make feith for hem and for to ben hir borwes. And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibee he saide hem thise wordes: It stant thus, quod Melibee, and soth it is that ye causeles and withouten skill and reson han don grete injuries and wronges to me and to my wif Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye han entred into myn hous by violence, and have don swiche outrage that alle men knowen wel that ye han deserved the deth; and therfore wol I know and wete of you whether ye wol putte the punishing and chastising, and the vengeaunce, of this outrage in the will of me and of my wif or ye wol not.

Than the wisest of hem three answered for hem alle, and saide; Sire, quod he, we knowen wel that we ben unworthy to come to the court of so gret a lord and so worthy as ye ben, for we han so gretly mi-

flaken us, and han offended and agilte in swiche wise
 again your high lordshipe, that trewely we han de-
 served the deth; but yet for the grete goodnesse and
 debonairetee that all the world witnesseth of youre
 persone we submitten us to the excellence and benig-
 nitee of youre gracious lordshipe, and ben redy to o-
 beye to alle youre comandements, beseeching you that
 of youre merciable pitee ye wol considere oure gret
 repentance and lowe submission, and graunte us fore-
 yevenesse of oure outrageous trespas and offence; for
 wel we knowen that youre liberal grace and mercie
 stretchen hem forther into goodnesse than don our
 outrageous giltes and trespas into wickednesse, al be
 it that cursedly and dampnably we han agilte again
 youre highe lordshipe.

Than Melibee toke hem up fro the ground ful be-
 nignely, and received hir obligations and hir bondes
 by hir othes upon hir plegges and borwes, and assigned
 hem a certain day to retourne unto his court for to re-
 ceive and accept sentence and jugement that Melibee
 wolde commande to be don on hem by the causes a-
 foresaid; which thinges ordeined every man retour-
 ned to his hous.

And whan that Dame Prudence saw hire time she
 freined, and axed hire Lord Melibee what vengeance
 he thoughte to taken of his adversaries?

To which Melibee answerd and saide; Certes, quod
 he, I thinke and purpoe me fully to differre hem of

all that ever they han, and for to putte hem in exile for ever.

Certes, quod Dame Prudence, this were a cruel sentence, and muchel agein reson, for ye ben riche ynough, and han no nede of other mennes good; and ye might lightly in this wise gete you a covetous name, which is a vicious thing, and oughte to be eschewed of every good man, for after the sawe of the apostle covetise is rote of alle harmes; and therefore it were better for you to lese muchel good of your owen than for to take of hir good in this manere; for better it is to lese good with worship than to winne good with vilanie and shame: and every man oughte to do his diligence and his besynesse to gete him a good name; and yet shal he not only besic him in keping his good name, but he shal also enforcen him alway to do som thing by which he may renouvelle his good name; for it is written that the olde good los or good name of a man is sone gon and passed whan it is not newed. And as touching that ye sayn, that ye wol exile your adversaries, that thinketh me muchel agein reson and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeven you upon himself; and it is written, that he is worthy to lese his privilege that misuseth the might and the power that is yeven him. And I sette cas ye might enjoinne hem that peine by right and by lawe, (which I trowe ye mowe not do) I say ye might not putte it to execution peraventure, and than it were like to retourne

to the werre as it was beforn : and therefore if you wol that men do you obeisaunce ye must deme more curteisly, that is to sayn, ye must yeve more esse sentences and jugements ; for it is writen, he that most curteisly commandeth to him men most obeyen. And therefore I pray you that in this necessitee and in this nede ye caste you to overcome youre herte ; for Senek sayth, that he that overcometh his herte overcometh twies ; and Tullius saith, Ther is nothing so commendable in a gret lord as when he is debonaire and meke, and appeleth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol now forbere to do vengeance in swiche a manere that your good name may be kept and conserved, and that men mown have cause and matere to preise you of pitce and of mercy, and that ye have no cause to repentte you of thing that ye don ; for Senek saith, He overcometh in an evil manere that repenteth of his victorie. Wherfore I pray you let mercy be in youre herte, to the effect and entente that God Almighty have mercy upon you in his last jugement ; for Seint James saith in his epistle, Jugement withoute mercy shal be do to him that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibee had herd the grete skilles and re-
sons of Dame Prudence, and hire wise informations
and techinges, his herte gan encline to the will of his
wif, considering hire trewe entente, enforced him a-
non. and assented fully to werken after hire conseil,

and thanked God, of whom procedeth all goodnesse and all vertue, that him sent a wif of so gret discretion. And whan the day came that his adversaries shulde appere in his presence he spake to hem ful goodly, and saide in this wise: Al be it so that of youre pride and high presumption and folie, and of youre negligence and unconning, ye have misborne you and trespassed unto me, yet for as muchel as I see and behold youre grete humilitee, and that ye ben sory and repentant of youre giltes, it constraineth me to do you grace and mercy; wherfore I receive you into my grace, and foryeve you outrely alle the offences, injuries, and wronges, that ye have don agein me and mine, to this effect and to this ende, that God of his endeles mercie wol at the time of oure dying foryeve us oure giltes that we han trespassed to him in this wretched world; for douteles if we be sory and repentant of the sinnes and giltes which we han trespassed in the sight of oure Lord God, he is so free and so merciable that he wol foryeven us oure giltes, and bringen us to the blisse that never hath ende. *Amen.*



This is my lif but if that I wol fight,
 And out at dore anon I mote me dight, 13920
 Or elles I am lost, but if that I
 Be like a wilde leon, fool-hardy.

I wote wel she wol do me sice som day
 Som neighebour, and thanne go my way,
 For I am perilous with knif in honde 13925
 Al be it that I dare not hire withstonde,
 For she is bigge in armes by my faith,
 That shal he finde that hire misdoth or faith.
 But let us passe away fro this matere.

My Lord the Monk, quod he, be mery of chere,
 For ye shal telle a Tale trewely. 13931
 Lo! Roucheſter ſtandeth here faſte by;
 Ride forth, min owen Lord, breke not our game.
 But by my trouthe I can not telle youre name;
 Whether shal I call you my Lord Dan John, 13935
 Or Dan Thomas, or elles Dan Albon?
 Of what hous be ye by your fader kin?
 I vow to God thou haſt a ful faire ſkin.
 It is a gentil paſture ther thou goſt;
 Thou art not like a penaunt or a goſt. 13940

Upon my faith thou art ſom officer,
 Som worthy ſextein, or ſom celerer,
 For by my fadres ſoule, as to my dome,
 Thou art a maiſter whan thou art at home;
 No poure cloiſterer, ne non novice, 13945
 But a governour bothe ware and wiſe,

And therewithal of braunces and of bones
 A right wel faring persone for the monke.
 I pray to God yeve him confusion
 That first thee brought into religion. F3
 Thou woldest han ben a trede-foul a right
 Haddest thou as grete leve as thou hast might
 To parfourme all thy lust: in engendrure
 Thou haddest begeten many a creature.
 Alas! why werest thou so wide a cope? F3
 God yeve me forwe but and I were pope
 Not only thou but every mighty man,
 Though he were shore ful high upon his pan,
 Shuld have a wif, for al this world is lorn,
 Religion hath take up all the corn F3
 Of treading, and we borel men ben shrimpes;
 Of feble trees ther comen wretched impes.
 This maketh that our heires ben so sclendre
 And feble that they moun not wel engendre;
 This maketh that our wives wol affaye F3
 Religious folk, for they moun better paye
 Of Venus payements than mowen we;
 God wote no Lusheburghes payen ye.

♀. 13948. *A right wel faring*] I have no better authority for the insertion of *right* than ed. *Urr*.

♀. 13968. *Lusheburghes*] Base coins, probably first impo-
 as Skinner thinks, from *Luxembourg*. They are mention-
 ed in the stat. 25 E. III. c. 2.; "La-monnoie appelle *Lucynbourg*,"
 in *P. P.* fol. 82, b.;

As in *Lusburgh* is a luther alay, yet loketh like *Berling*.

But be not wroth, my Lord, though that I play;
 Ful oft in game a sothe have I herd say. 13970

This worthy Monke toke all in patience,
 And saide, I wol don all my diligence,
 As fer as souneth into honestee,
 To tellen you a Tale, or two or three;
 And if you list to herken hiderward 13975
 I wol you sayn the lif of Seint Edward,
 Or elles tragedies first I wol telle,
 Of which I have an hundred in my celle.

Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,
 As olde bookes maken us memorie, 13980
 Of him that stood in gret prosperitee,
 And is yfallen out of high degree
 In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly;
 And they ben versified communly
 Of six feet, which men clepen Exametron : 13985
 In prose eke ben endited many on,
 And eke in metre in many a sondry wise.
 Lo this declaring ought ynough suffice.

Now herkeneth if you liketh for to here.
 But first I you besече in this matere, 13990
 Though I by ordre telle not thise thinges,
 Be it of popes, emperoures, or kinges,
 After hir ages, as men written finde,
 But telle hem som before and som behinde,
 As it now cometh to my remembrance, 13995
 Have me excused of min ignorance.

THE MONKES TALE.

I Wol bewaile in manere of tragedie
 The harm of hem that stode in high degree,
 And fellen so that ther n'as no remedie
 To bring hem out of hir adversitee; 14000
 For certain whan that Fortune list to flee
 Ther may no man of hire t'ours withholde:
 Let no man trust on blinde prosperitee;
 Beth ware by thise ensamples trewe and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were 14001
 And not a man, at him I wol beginne;
 For though Fortune may non angel dere,
 From high degree yet fell he for his sinne
 Down into helle, wheras he yet is inne.
 O Lucifer! brightest of angels alle, 14011
 Now art thou Sathanas, that maist not twinne
 Out of miserie in which that thou art falle.

Adam.

Lo! Adam in the feld of Damascene
 With Goddes owen finger wrought was he,
 And not begeten of mannes sperme unclene, 14012

The Monkes Tale] A tragical discourse of many who ha
 fallen from high estate to extreme misery. *Urry.*

ψ. 14013; *in the feld of Damascene*] So Lydgate, from Be
 cace, speaks of Adam and Eve, *Trag. b. i. c. 1.*;

Of slime of the erth in *Damascene the feld*

God made them above ech creature.

Boccace is much longer in relating their story, while
 first of his tragedies.

And welte all Paradis saving o tree.
 Had never worldly man so high degree
 As Adam, til he for misgovernance
 Was driven out of his prosperitee
 To labour, and to helle, and to mefchance. 14020

Sampson.

Lo! Sampson, which that was annunciat
 By the angel long or his nativitee.
 And was to God Almightie
 And stode in noblesse whiche
 Was never swiche another 14025
 To speke of strength and
 But to his wives tolde he
 Thurgh which he slow him 14030

Sampson, this noble and mightie
 Withouten wepen save his handes twey 14035
 He slow and all to-rente the leon,
 Toward his wedding walking by the wey.
 His false wif coude him so plesse and pray
 Til she his conseil knewe, and she untrewed
 Unto his foes his conseil gan bewray, 14040
 And him forsoke, and toke another newe.

Three hundred foxes toke Sampson for ire,
 And all hir tayles he togeder bond,
 And set the foxes tayles all on fire,

✧. 14021. *Sampson*] His tragedy is also in *Boccace*, b. i. c. 19.
 — Author seems rather to have followed the original,
 xxiv, xv, xvi.

For he in every tayl had knit a brond, 14040
 And they brent all the cornes in that lond,
 And all hir oliveres and vines eke.
 A thousand men he flow eke with his hond,
 And had no wepen but an asses cheke.

Whan they were slain so thurstid him that he
 Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to preye 14045
 That God wold on his peine han som pitee,
 And send him drinke, or elles moſte he deye;
 And of this asses cheke that was so dreye
 Out of a wang toth sprang anon a welle, 14050
 Of which he drank ynough, shortly to ſeye.
 Thus halp him God, as *Judicum* can telle.

By veray force at Gaza on a night,
 Maugre the Philistins of that citee,
 The gates of the toun he hath up plight, 14055
 And on his bak ycaried hem hath he
 High on an hill, wher as men might hem ſe.
 O noble mighty Sampſon, leſe and dere!
 Haddeſt thou not told to women thy ſecree
 In all this world ne had ther ben thy pere. 14060

This Sampſon never ſider drank ne wine,
 Ne on his hed came raſour non ne ſhere,
 By precept of the meſſager divine,
 For all his ſtrengthes in his heres were:
 And fully twenty winter yere by yere 14065
 He hadde of Iſrael the governance;
 But ſone ſhal he wepen many a tere,
 For women ſhul him bringen to meſchance.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told
 That in his heres all his strengthe lay, 14070
 And falsely to his fomen she him sold;
 And sleping in hire barme upon a day
 She made to clip or shere his here away,
 And made his fomen al his craft espion;
 And whan that they him fond in this array 14075
 They bond him fast, and putten out his eyen.

But or his here was clipped or yshave
 Ther was no bond with which men might him bind,
 But now is he in prison in a cave,
 Wheras they made him at the querne grinde. 14080
 O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind,
 O whilom juge in glory and richesse!
 Now mayest thou wepen with thin eyen blind
 Sith thou fro wele art falle in wretchednesse.

The ende of this caitif was as I shal seye: 14085
 His fomen made a feste upon a day,
 And made him as hir fool before hem pleye,
 And this was in a temple of gret array:
 But at the last he made a foule affray,
 For he two pillers shoke and made hem falle, 14090
 And doun fell temple and all, and thcr it lay,
 And flow himself, and eke his fomen alle.

This is to sayn, the princes everich on,
 And eke three thousand bodies, were ther slain
 With falling of the gret temple of ston. 14095

✧. 14080. *the querne*] The mill; kuerna, mola, mand.

Of Sampson now wol I no more sain:
 Beth ware by this ensample old and plain
 That no men tell hir conseil to hir wives
 Of swiche thing as they wold han secree-fain,
 If that it touch hir limmes or hir lives. 14108

Hercules.

Of Hercules the soveraine conquerour
 Singen his werkes laude, and high renown,
 For in his time of strength he was the flour.
 He slow and raft the skinne of the leon;
 He of Centaures laid the boft adoun; 14109
 He Harpies slow, the cruel briddes felle;
 He golden apples raft fro the dragon;
 He drow out Cerberus, the hound of helle.

He slow the cruel tirant Busirus,
 And made his hors to fret him flesh and bon; 14110
 He slow the firy serpent venemous;
 Of Achelous two hornes brake he on;
 And he slow Cacus in a cave of ston;
 He slow the geaunt Anteus the strong;
 He slow the grisely bore, and that anon; 14115
 And bare the hevene on his nekke long.

✧. 14101. *Hercules*] In this account of the labours of Hercules Chaucer has evidently copied *Boethius*, l. iv. met. 7. Many of the expressions he had used before in his prose translation of that author.

✧. 14116. *the hevene on his nekke long*] This is the reading of the best mss. and is agreeable to *Boethius*, *loc. cit.* thus translated by Chaucer; "And the last of his labors was, that he sustained the heven upon his necke unbowed." The margin of "ms. C. 1. explains long to mean diu.—The edit. read,
 And bare his bed upon his spere long.

Was never wight like that the world began
 That slow so many monstres as did he;
 Thurghout the wide world his name ran,
 What for his strength and for his high bountee;
 And every reasme went he for to see. 14121
 He was so strong that no man might him let;
 At bothe the worldes endes, saith Trophee,
 A fiede of boundes he a piller set.

A lemman had this noble champion 14125
 That highte Deianire, as fresh as May;
 And, as thise clerkes maken mention,
 He hath him sent a sherte fresh and gay:
 Alas! this sherte, alas and wala wa!
 Invenimed was sotilly withalle, 14130
 That or that he had wered it half a day
 Made his flesh all from his bones falle.

But natheles som clerkes hire excusen
 On that highte Nessus, that it maketh:
 As may be I wol hire not accusen; 14135
 On his bak this sherte he wered al naked,
 That his flesh was for the venim blaked;
 When he saw non other remedie
 Of coles he hath himselven raked,
 With no venime deigned him to die. 14140

4123. *saith Trophee*] As all the best mss. agree in this
 I have retained it, though I cannot tell what author
 led to. The margin of C. 1 has this note; "Ille vates
 laorum Tropheus."—The edit. read—*for Trophee*.—

Thus starf this worthy mighty Hercules.
 Lo! who may trust on Fortune any throw?
 For him that folweth all this world of pres
 Or he be ware is oft ylaïd ful lowe:
 Ful wise is he that can himselven knowe. 14145
 Beth ware, for whan that Fortune list to glofe
 Than waiteth she hire man to overthrowe
 By swiche a way as he wold lest suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresor,
 The glorious sceptre, and real majestee, 14150
 That hadde the King Nabuchodonosor,
 With tonge unnethes may describ'd be:
 He twijes wan Jerusalem the citee,
 The vessell of the temple he with him ladde;
 At Babiloine was his soveraine see, 14155
 In which his glorie and his delit he hadde.

The fayrest children of the blood real
 Of Israel he did do gelde anon,
 And mak'd eche of hem to ben his thral.
 Amonges other Daniel was on, 14160
 That was the wisest child of everich on,
 For he the dremes of the king expouned,
 Wher as in Caldee clerk ne was ther non
 That wiste to what fin his dremes souned.

This proude king let make a statue of gold 14165
 Sixty cubites long and seven in brede,

¶ 14151. *Nabuchodonosor*] For this history and the follow-
 ing of Balthasar see Daniel i—v. The latter only is related by
Boccaccio, b. ii. c. xxiii.

To which image bothe yonge and old
 Commanded he to loute and have in dredé,
 Or in a fourneis ful of flames rede
 He shuld be brent that wolde not obeye; 14170
 But never wold assenten to that dede
 Daniel, ne his yonge felawes tweye.

This king of kinges proud was and elat;
 He wend that God that sit in majestee
 Ne might him nat bereve of his estat: 14175
 But sodenly he lost his dignitee.
 And like a best him semed fer to be,
 And ete hey as an oxe, and lay therout:
 In rain with wilde bestes walked he
 Til certain time was ycome about. 14180

And like an egles fethers wex his heres,
 His neyles like a briddes clawes were,
 Til God relefed him at certain yeres,
 And yaf him wit, and than with many a tere
 He thanked God, and ever his lif in fere 14185
 Was he to don amis, or more trespase:
 And til that time he laid was on his bere
 He knew that God was ful of might and grace.

Balthasar.

His sone, which that highte Balthasar,
 That held the regne after his fadres day, 14190
 He by his fader coude not beware,
 For proude he was of herte and of array,
 And eke an ydolaster was he ay.
 His high estat assured him in pride;

But Fortune cast him down (and ther he lay) 14195
And fodenly his regne gan devide.

A feste he made unto his lordes alle
Upon a time, and made hem blithe be,
And than his officeres gan he calle;
Goth bringeth forthe the vessels, quod he, 14200
Which that my fader in his prosperitee
Out of the temple of Jerausalem beaft,
And to our highe goddes thanke we
Of honour, that our eldres with us laft.

His wif, his lordes, and his concubines, 14205
Ay drunken, while hir appetites laft,
Out of thise noble vessels sondry winea.
And on a wall this king his eyen cast,
And saw an hand armles that wrote ful fast,
For fere of whiche he quoke and fiked fore : 14210
This hand, that Bakthasar so fore agast,
Wrote *Mane techel Phares*, and no more.

In al that lond magicien was non
That coud expounen what this lettre ment,
But Daniel expounded it anon, 14215
And said, O King! God to thy fader lent
Glorie and honour, regne, trefour, and rent,
And he was proud and nothing God ne dradde,
And therfore God gret wreche upon him sent,
And him beaft the regne that he hadde. 14220

He was out cast of mannes compaignie,
With asses was his habitation,
and etc hey as a best in wete and drie,

Til that he knew by grace and by reson
 That God of heven hath domination 14225
 Over every regne and every creature,
 And than had God of him compassion,
 And him restored his regne and his figure.

Eke thou that art his sone art proud also,
 And knowest all thise thinges veraily, 14230
 And art rebel to God and art his fo :
 Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldely,
 Thy wif eke and thy wenches sinfully
 Dranke of the same vessels sondry wines,
 And heried false goddes cursedly, 14235
 Therfore to thee ysnapen ful gret pine is.

This hand was sent fro God that on the wall
 Wrote *Mene techel Phares*, trusteth me.
 Thy regne is don; thou weyest nought at all :
 Divided is thy regne, and it shal be 14240
 To Medes and to Perles yeven, quod he.
 And thilke same night this king was slawe,
 And Darius occupied his degre,
 Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, ensample hereby moun ye take 14245
 How that in lordship is no liker nesse,
 For whan that Fortune wol a man forsake
 She bereth away his regne and his richesse,
 And eke his frendes, bothe more and lesse ;
 For what man that hath frendes thurgh Fortune
 Mithap wol make hem enemies ! gesse. 14251
 This proverbe is ful soth, and ful commune.

Zenobia.

Zenobia, of Palmerie the queene,
 (As writen Persiens of hire nobleffe)
 So worthy was in armes, and so kene, 14253
 That no wight passed hire in hardinesse,
 Ne in linage ne in other gentillesse.
 Of kinges blood of Perse is she descended ;
 I say not that she hadde most fairenesse,
 But of hire shape she might not ben amended. 14260

From hire childhode I finde that she fledde
 Office of woman, and to wode she went,
 And many a wilde hartes blood she shedde
 With armes brode that she to hem sent ;
 She was so swift that she anon hem hent : 14265
 And whan that she was elder she wold kille
 Leons, leopards, and beres al to-rent,
 And in hire armes weld hem at hire wille.

She dorst the wilde bestes dennes seke,
 And rennen in the mountaignes all the night, 14270
 And slepe under the bush ; and she coude eke
 Wraistlen by veray force and veray might
 With any yong man, were he never so wight ;
 Ther mighte nothing in hire armes stonde :

✧. 14253 *Zenobia*] Her story is told by Boccace, *De cas. Vir.* l. viii. c. 7, but more at large in his book *De claris Mulieribus*, from which our Author has plainly taken almost every circumstance of his narration, though in ver. 14331 he seems to refer to Petrarch as his original. Perhaps Boccace's book had fallen into Chaucer's hands under the name of Petrarch.

She kept hire maidenhode from every wight; 14275
To no man deigned hire for to be bonde.

But at the last hire frendes han hire maried
To Odenat, a prince of that contree,
Al were it so that she hem longe taried,
And ye shul understonden how that he 14280
Hadde swiche fantasies as hadde she;
But natheles whan they were knit in fere
They lived in joye and in felicitye,
For eche of hem had other lefe and dere;

Save o thing, that she n'olde never assente 14285
By no way that he shulde by hire lie
But ones, for it was hire plaine entente
To have a childe the world to multiplie;
And al so sone as that she might espie
That she was not with childe with that dede, 14290
Than wold she suffer him don his fantasie
Eftsoone, and not but ones out of drede.

And if she were with child at thilke cast
No more shuld he playen thilke game
Till fully forty dayes weren past, 14295
Than wold she ones suffre him do the same.
Al were this Odenate wild or tame
He gate no more of hire, for thus she sayde,

¶ 14295. *Till fully forty dayes*] There is a confusion in this passage which might have been avoided if our Author had resorted to Trebellius Pollio, *Trig. Tyrann. c. xxix. de Zenobia*; "*Quum semel concubuisset, expectatis menstruis, continebat se si prægna esset; sin minus, iterum potestatem querens dis liberis dabat.*"

It was to wives lecherie and shame
In other cas if that men with hem playde. 14300

Two sones by this Odenate had she,
The which she kept in vertue and lettrure.
But now unto our Tale turne we.

I say so worshipful a creature,
And wise therwith, and large with mesure, 14305
So penible in the werre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in werre endure,
Was non, though all this world men sholden seke.

Hire riche array ne mighte not be told,
As wel in vessell as in hire clothing; 14310
She was all clad in pierric and in gold;
And eke she lefte not for non hunting
To have of sondry tonges ful knowing,
Whan that she leiser had, and for to entend
To lernen bookes was all hire liking, 14315
How she in vertue might hire lif dispend.

And shortly of this storie for to trete,
So doughty was hire husbond and eke she
That they conquered many regnes grete
In the orient, with many a faire citee 14320
Appertenaunt unto the majestee
Of Rome, and with strong hand held hem ful fast,
Ne never might hir fomen don hem flee
Ay while that Odenates dayes last.

Hire batailles, who so list hem for to rede, 14325
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,

And how that all this processe fell in dede,
 Why she conquered, and what title therto,
 And after of hire mischefe and hire wo;
 How that she was beseged and ytake, 14330
 Let him unto my maister Petrark go,
 That writeth ynough of this I undertake.

Whan Odenate was ded she mightly
 The regnes held, and with hire propre hond
 Agains hir foos she fought so cruelly 14335
 That ther n'as king ne prince in all that lond
 That he n'as glad if he that grace fond
 That she ne wolde upon his lond worreye;
 With hire they maden alliaunce by bond
 To ben in pees and let hire ride and pleye. 14340

The Emperour of Rome Claudius,
 Ne him befor the Romain Galien,
 Ne dorste never be so corageous,
 Ne non Ermin ne non Egiptien,
 Ne Surrien ne non Arabien, 14345
 Within the feld ne dorste with hire fight,
 Lest that she wold hem with hire hondes slen,
 Or with hire meinie putten hem to flight.

In kinges habite wente hire sones two
 As heires of hir fadres regnes alle, 14350
 And Heremanno and Timolao
 Hir names were, as Persiens hem calle.
 But ay Fortune hath in hire hony galle:
 This mighty quene may no while endure;

Fortune out of hire regne made hire falle 14355
 'To wretchednesse and to misaventure.

Aurelian, when that the governance
 Of Rome came into his hondea tway,
 He shope upon this queene to do vengeance,
 And with his legions he toke his way 14360
 Toward Zenobie; and, shortly for to say,
 He made hire flee; and atte last hire hent,
 And fettered hire and eke hire children tway,
 And wan the lond, and home to Rome he went.

Amonges other thinges that he wan 14365
 Hire char, that was with gold wrought and pierrie,
 This grete Romain, this Aurelian,
 Hath with him lad for that men shuld it see.
 Beforen his triumphe walketh she,
 With gilte chaines on hire necke honging, 14370
 Crouned she was, as after hire degree,
 And ful of pierrie charged hire clothing.

Alas, Fortune! she that whilom was
 Dredeful to kinges and to emperoures,
 Now gaureth all the peple on hire, alas! 14375
 And she that helmed was in starke floures,
 And wan by force tonnes stronge and toures,
 Shal on hire hed now were a vitremite,
 And she that bare the sceptre ful of floures
 Shal here a distaf, hire cost for to quite. 14380

v. 14378. *à vitremite*] This word is differently written in the mss. *vitrymite*, *witermite*, *wintermite*, *witryte*. The edit. read *vitremite*, which is equally unintelligible.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious
 As any fend that lish full low adown;
 Yet he, as telleth us Suetonius,
 This wide world had in subjection,
 Both east and west, south and septentrion. 14385
 Of rubies, sapphires, and of perles whites;
 Were all his clothes bredded up and down;
 For he in gemmes greatly gan delight.

More delicat, more pompous of array,
 More proude, was never emperour than he, 14390
 That ilke cloth that he had wored a day
 After that time he n'old it never see:
 Nettes of gold threds had he gret plentes
 To fish in Tiber whan him list to play;
 His lustes were as law in his degree; 14395
 For Fortune as his friend wold him obey.

He Rome brente for his delicacie;
 The Senatours he slow upon a day
 To heren how that men wold wepe and cry,
 And slow his brother, and by his suster lay. 14400
 His moder made he in pitous array,

† 14385. *south and septentrion*] The MS. read *north*; but there can be no doubt of the propriety of the correction, which was first made, I believe, in ed. *Urr.* In the *Ron. de la R.* from whence great part of this tragedy of Nero is translated, the passage stands thus, ver. 6501.;

Ce desloyal, que je te dy,
 Et d'orient et de *nildy*,
 D'occident, de *septentrion*.
 Tint-il la jurisdiction.

Tij

For he hire wombe let flitten, to behold
 Wher he conceived was, so wala wa!
 That he so litel of his moder told.

No tere out of his eyen for that sight I4405
 Ne came, but fayd a faire woman was she.
 Gret wonder is how that he coud or might
 Be domesman of hire dede beautee.
 The wine to bringen him commanded he,
 And dranke anon; so other wo he made. I4410
 Whan might is joined unto crueltee,
 Alas! to depe wol the venime wade.

In youthe a maister had this emperour
 To tuchen him lettrure and curtesie:
 For of moralitee he was the flour, I4415
 As in his time, but if bookes lie;
 And while this maister had of him maistrie
 He maked him so conning and so souple
 That longe time it was or tyrannie
 Or any vice dorst in him uncouple. I4420

This Seneka, of which that I devise,
 Because Nero had of him swiche drede,
 For he fro vices wold him ay chastise
 Discretly, as by word and not by dede;
 Since he wold fay, an emperour mote nede I4425

sy. 14408 *domesman*] Judge; the word in Boethius, who has
 also related this story, is *cenfor*, l. ii. met. vi.;

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse

Cenfor extincti potuit decoris—

which our Author has thus rendered in his prose version; “Ne
 “no tere wette his face, but he was so harde herted that he
 “might be *domesman* or *judge* of her dedde beautee.”

Be vertuous, and hate tyrannie;
 For which he chaunge him in a bathe to blede
 Or bathe his armes till he muste die.

This Nero had eke of a custumaunce
 In youth agains his maister for to rise, I 4430
 Which afterward him thought a gret grevaunce,
 Therefore he made him dien in this wise.
 But natheles this Seneca the wise
 Chees in a bathe to die in this maners
 Rather than han another carmentise: I 4435
 And thus hath Nero slain his maister dere.

Now fell it so that Fortune list no lenger
 The highe pride of Nero to cherice,
 For though that he were strong yet was she stronger.
 She thoughte thus; by God I am to nice I 4440
 To set a man that is fulfilled of vice
 In high degree, and Emperour him calle;
 By God out of his sote I wol him trice;
 Whan he lest wemeth sonest shal he falle.

The peple rose upon him on a night I 4445
 For his defeaute, and whan he it espied
 Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
 Alone, and ther he wend han ben allied
 He knocked fast, and ay the more he cried
 The faster shetten they hir dores alle; I 4450
 Tho wist he wel he had himself misgied,
 And went his way; no lenger dorst he calle.

The peple cried and rombled up and down,
 That with his eres herd he how they sayde,
 Wher is this false tyrant, this Neroun?
 For fere almost out of his wit he bryght,
 And so his goddes pitoussly he prays
 For socour, but it mighte not beaide,
 For drede of this him thoughte that he deide,
 And ran into a gardin him to hide.

And in this gardin foud he cherles swaye
 That faten by a fire grete and red,
 And to this cherles two he gan to praye
 To slen him, and to girden of his hed,
 That to his body whan that he were ded
 Were no despit ydon for his defame.
 Himself he slow, he coud no better rede,
 Of which Fortune lough and hadde a game.

Holofernes.

Was never capitaine under a king
 That regnes mo' put in subiectioun,
 Ne sencer was in feld of alle thing
 As in his time, ne greter of renoun,
 Ne more pompous in high presumptioun,
 Than Holoferne, which that Fortune ay kist
 So likeroussly, and lad him up and down,
 Fit that his hed was of or that he wist.

Not only that this world had him in awe
 For lesing of richesse and libertee,
 But he made every man rencie his lawe.

Nabuchodonosor was God, sayd he; 14480
 Non other god ne shulde honoured be.
 Ageins his heste ther dare no wight trespase
 Save in Bethulia, a strong citee,
 Wher Eliachim a preest was of that place.
 But take kepe of the deth of Holoferne: 14485
 Amid his host he drunken lay a night
 Within his tente, large as is a berne;
 And yet for all his pompe and all his might
 Judith, a woman, as he lay upright
 Sleping, his hed of smote, and fro his tente 14490
 Ful prively she stole from every wight,
 And with his hed unto hire toun she wente.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of King Antiochus
 To tell his high and real majestee,
 His gret pride, and his werkes venimous? 14495
 For swiche another was ther non as he:
 Redeth what that he was in Machabe,
 And redeth the proud wordes that he seid,
 And why he fell from his prosperitee,
 And in an hill how wretchedly he deid. 14500

¶ 14484. *Wher Eliachim*] I cannot find any priest of this name in the book of *Judith*. The High Priest of Jerusalem is called *Jacim* in c. iv, which name would suit the verse better than *Eliachim*.

¶ 14493. *Antiochus*] This tragedy is a poetical paraphrase of second *Maccabees*, chap. ix.

Fortune him had embanked so in yethen,
 That veraily he woud he might attaine
 Unto the steres upon every side,
 And in a balance wayen othe mountaine,
 And all the floodes of the see restraine : 1435

And Goddes peple had he most in hate;
 Hem wold he deep in turtment and in peine,
 Wening that God wou might his pride abate.
 And for that Michanor and Timothee
 With Jewes were vanquished mightily, 1440
 Upon the Jewes swiche an hate had he
 That he bad grete his charful hestly,
 And swore and sayde ful despitously
 Unto Jerusalem he wold enfone,
 To wreke his ire on is full cruelly; 1445

But of his purpos was he let ful sone.
 God for his manace him so fore smote
 With invisible wound, ay incurable;
 That in his guttes carfe it so and bore
 Thatte his peines weren importable; 1450
 And certainly the wretche was resonable,
 For many a mannes guttes did he peine;
 But from his purpos cursed and damnable,
 For all his smerte, he n'olde him not restraine;
 But bade anon apparailen his host. 1455
 And sodenly, or he was of it ware,
 God daunted all his pride and all his host;

For he so fore fell out of his chare
 That it his limmes and his skinne to-tare,
 So that he neither mighte go ne ride, I4530
 But in a chaire men about him bare,
 Alle forbrused bothe bak and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly
 That thurgh his body wicked wormes crept,
 And therwithal he ~~made~~ so horribly. I4535
 That non of all his meinie that him kept,
 Whether so that he woke or elles slept,
 Ne mighte not of him the stinke endure.
 In this mischiefe he wailed and eke wept,
 And knew God lord of every creature. I4540

To all his host and to himself also
 Ful wlatfom was the stinke of his carcine;
 No man ne mighte him beren to ne fro;
 And in this stinke and this horrible peine
 He starf ful wretchedly in a mountaine. I4545
 Thus hath this robbour and this homicide,
 That many a man made to wepe and pleine,
 Swiche guerdon as belongeth unto pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexandre is so commune
 That every wight that hath discretioun I4550
 Hath herd somwhat or all of his fortune.
 This wide world, as in conclusioun,
 He wan by strength, or for his high renown

They weren glad for peace unto him made,
The pride of man had left he layd aside,
What so he came, unto the worldes ende.

Comparison might never yet be made
Betwix him and another conqueror,
For al this world for drede of him hath quake;
He was of highchastite and of fre chere,
Fortune him maketh the helpe of his honour;
Save wine and women nothing might him age;
His high entente in armes and labour,
So was he ful of bounden courage.

What pris were it to him though I you telle
Of Darius, and an hundred thousand more
Of kinges, princes, dukes, erles bold,
Which he conquered, and brought hem into woe;
I say as fer as man may ride or go
The world was his; what shuld I more devise?
For though I wrote or told you ever mo
Of his knighthode it mighte not suffice.

Twelf yere he reigned, as faith Machabe:
Philippus sone of Macedoine he was;
That first was king in Greece the contree. 14575
O worthy gentill Alexandre! alas
That ever shuld thee fallen swiche a cas!
Enpoisoned of thyn owen folke thou were;
Thy sis Fortune hath turned into an as,
And yet for that he wept the never a tere. 14580

Who shal me yeven teres to complaine
The deth of gentilleffe and of fraunchise,

That all this world welded in his demaine,
 And yet him thought it mighte not suffice?
 So ful was his corage of high emprise. 14585
 Alas! who shal me helpen to endite
 Falso Fortune, and poison to despise?
 The whiche two of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wifdome, manhode, and by gret labour,
 From humblehede to real majestee 14590
 Up rose he Julius the conquerour,
 That wan all the occident by hond and see
 By strengthe of hond or elles by trectee,
 And unto Rome made hem tributarie,
 And sith of Rome the Emperour was he 14595
 Til that Fortune wexe his adversarie.

O mighty Cesar! that in Thessalie
 Ageins Pompeius, father thiu in lawe,
 That of the orient had all the chivalrie
 As fer as that the day beginneth dawe, 14600
 Thou thurgh thy knighthode hast hem take and slawe,
 Save few folk that with Pompeius fledde,
 Thurgh which thou put all the orient in awe,
 Thanke Fortune that so wel thee spedde.

But now a litel while I wol bewaile 14605
 This Pompeius, this noble governour
 Of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
 I say on of his men, a false traitour,
 His hed of smote, to winnen him savour

They weren glad for pees u
The pride of man and host
Wher so he came, unto the

Comparison might never
Betwix him and another co
For al this world for drede
He was of knighthode and
Fortune him maked the hei
Save wine and women noth
His high entente in armes
So was he ful of leonin cora

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 as fer as that the day beginneth dawe, 14600
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But now a litel while I wol bewaile 14605
 his Pompeius, this noble governour
 of Rome, which that fled at this bataille.
 say on of his men, a faise traitour,
 his hed of smote, to winnen him favour

He wened wel for that Fortune him sent 14655
 Swiche hap that he escaped thurgh the rain.
 That of his foos he mighte not be slain;
 And eke a sweven upon a night he mette
 Of which he was so proud and eke so fain
 That in vengeance he all his herte sette. 14660

Upon a tree he was, as that him thought,
 Ther Jupiter him weshe both bak and side,
 And Phebus eke a faire towail him brought
 To drie him with, and therfore wex his pride.
 And to his doughter that stood him beside, 14665
 Which that he knew in high science habound,
 He bad hire tell him what it signified,
 And she his dreame began right thus expound.

The tree (quod she) the galwes is to mene,
 And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rain, 14670
 And Phebus with his towail clere and clene,
 'Tho ben the sonnes stremes, soth to fain:
 Thou shalt anhangd be, fader, certain;
 Rain shal thee wash, and sonne shal thee drie.
 Thus warned him ful plat and eke ful plain 14675
 His doughter, which that called was Phanie.

Anhangd was Cresus the proude king;
 His real trone might him not auaile:
 Tragedie is non other maner thing,

*. 14679. Tragedie is] This reflection seems to have been suggested by one which follows soon after the mention of Cresus in the passage just cited from Boethius; "What other thing

Ne can in finging crien ne bewaile, 14680
 But for that Fortune all day wol affaille.
 With unware stroke the regnes that ben proude;
 For whan men truften hire than wol she faille,
 And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

Peter of Spaine.

O noble, o worthy, Petro, glorie of Spaine! 14685
 Whom Fortune held so high in majestee,
 Wel oughten men thy pitous deth complaine:
 Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee,
 And after at a fege by sotiltee
 Thou were betraied and lad unto his tent, 14690

"bewaylen the cryinges of *tragedyes* but onely the dedes of
 "Fortune, that with an aukwarde stroke overtourneth the
 "realmes of grete nobleye!"

ψ. 14685. *Petro of Spaine*] This tragedie and the three fol-
 lowing, in several mss are inserted before, after ver. 14380, so
 that The Monkes Tale ends with ver. 14684.;

And cover hire bright face with a cloude.

In favour of this arrangement it may be observed, that when
 the Monk is interrupted the Hoste alludes to this line as fresh
 in his memory, ver. 14788.;

He spake how *Fortune covered with a cloude*

I wote not what, and als of a *tragedie*

Right now ye herd—

where *tragedie* may be supposed to allude to ver. 14679.—On
 the other hand, though the Monk professedly disregards chro-
 nological order, these very modern stories in the midst of the
 ancient make an aukward appearance; and as the Hoste declares
 himself to have been half asleep he may very well be supposed
 to speak from a confused recollection of what had been said
 eighty-eight verses before; and what he says of *tragedie* may
 be referred to ver. 14768.—I have followed the order obser-
 ved in the best mss. C. 1. A. B. 1, 2, H. A.

Himself dispeired eke for hunger starf. 14763
Thus ended is this mighty Erl of Pise :
From high estat Fortune away him carf.
Of this tragedie it ought ynough suffice ;
Who so wol here it in a longer wise
Redeth the grete poete of Itaille 14770
That highte Dante, for he can it devise
Fro point to point ; not o word wol he faille. 14772

†. 14765, 6.] These two verses in the editt. have been transposed, to the confusion of the sense as well as of the metre.

Petro King of Cypré.

O worthy Petro! King of Cypré also,
 That Alexandrie wan by high mischief,
 Ful many an Hethen wroughtest thou ful wo,
 Of which thin owen lieges had envie,
 And for nothing but for thy chivalrie 14705
 They in thy bed han slain thee by the morwe.
 Thus can Fortune hire whele governie and gie,
 And out of joye bringen men to sorwe.

Barnabo Viscount.

Of Milane grete Barnabo Viscount,
 God of delit, and scourge of Lumbardie, 14710
 Why shuld I not thin infortune account,
 Sith in estat thou clomben were so high?
 Thy brothers sone, that was thy double allie,

¶ 14701. *Petro King of Cypré*] Concerning the taking of Alexandria by this prince, and his other exploits, see the note on ver. 51, and the authors there cited. He was assassinated in 1469, *Acad. des Ins. t. xi. p. 439.*

¶ 14709. *Barnabo Viscount*] Barnabò Visconti, Duke of Milan, was deposed by his nephew, and thrown into prison, where he died in 1385. — I did not attend to this circumstance when I stated the insurrection of Strawe in 1381 as the latest historical fact mentioned in these Tales, *Discourse, &c. n. 6.* The death of Barnabò was certainly later. Fortunately however this difference of four years has no other consequence than that it makes the supposed date of the pilgrimage in 1383, which was before very doubtful, still more improbable. The Knight might as probably be upon a pilgrimage in 1387 as in 1383, according to the precedent of Sir Mathew de Gourney. See note on ver. 43.

For he thy neveu was and sone in lawe,
 Within his prison made he thee to die, 14715
 But why ne how n'ot I that thou were slawe.

Hugelin of Pise.

Of the Erl Hugelin of Pise the langour
 Ther may no tonge tellen for pitee.
 But litel out of Pise stant a tour,
 In whiche tour in prison yput was he, 14720
 And with him ben his litel children three,
 The eldest scarcely five yere was of age :
 Alas ! Fortune, it was gret crueltee
 Swiche briddes for to put in swiche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison, 14725
 For Roger which that Bishop was of Pise
 Had on him made a false suggestion,
 Thurgh which the peple gan upon him rise,
 And put him in prison in swiche a wise
 As ye han herd ; and mete and drinke he had 14730
 So smale, that wel unnethe it may suffise,
 And therwithal it was ful poure and bad.

And on a day befell that in that houre
 When that his mete wont was to be brought
 The gailer shette the dores of the toure ; 14735
 He herd it wel, but he spake right nought :
 And in his herte anon ther fell a thought

†. 14717. Hugelin of Pise] Chaucer himself has referred us to Dante for the original of this tragedy. See *Inferno*, c. xxxiii.

That they for hunger wolden do him dien :
 Alas ! quod he, alas that I was wrought !
 Therwith the teres fellen fro his eyen. 14740

His yonge sone, that thre yere was of age,
 Unto him said, Fader, why do ye wepe ?
 Whan will the gailer bringen our potage ?
 Is ther no morfel bred that ye do kepe ?
 I am so hungry that I may not slepe. 14745
 Now wolde God that I might slepen ever,
 Than shuld not hunger in my wombe crepe ;
 Ther n'is no thing fauf bred that me were lever.

Thus day by day this childe began to crie,
 Til in his fadres barme adoun it lay, 14750
 And faide, Farewel, fader, I mote die ;
 And kist his fader, and dide the same day.
 And whan the woful fader did it sey
 For wo his armes two he gan to bite,
 And faide, Alas ! Fortune, and wala wa ! 14755
 Thy false whele my wo all may I wite.

His children wenden that for hunger it was
 That he his armes gnowe, and not for wo,
 And sayden, Fader, do not so, alas !
 But rather ete the flesh upon us two : 14760
 Our flesh thou yaf us, take our flesh us fro,
 And ete ynough. Right thus they to him seide,
 And after that, within a day or two,
 They laide hem in his lappe adoun and deide.



